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ADAM

FACT • FICTION • HUMOR



**NIGHT OF
THE ONION
- PAGE 26**

girls



MAN ANNUAL
OUT
NOW

gags

girls

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ANYBODY CAN MAKE A MISTAKE

Depending on the target, a bazooka is one helluva gun. One moment the cruiser was there, the next...

FICTION/VE. J. Bailey

IT ALL STARTED one morning about three weeks ago. I remember I'd woken in a cold sweat and it took me time to focus. First the flicking wallpaper, then the bug-stained light bulb and, last of all, her.

She got up from the chair and walked across, prepping about a metre short of the rusty cot and singing merrily. She did everything in slow time, so I could zero in on the salient features... especially the loose cotton top that gave her breasts room to move and breathe as she walked.

"You are Harry Carter?"

I nodded, pinching myself to make sure I wasn't watching a mid-day movie.

"Harry Carter, ex Korea, Kenya and the Congo?"

"The same."

"In that case," she said, "Can you make it to the bathroom by yourself and clean up?" I went to see the Harry Carter of the 50s and 60s. I'm not mad about the 1976 model. Frankly, it stinks."

For two whole seconds I stayed there. I even thought why the hell should this woman tell me what to do. Then she leaned forward and her full, high breasts were almost grilling out of the low cut top and I was her man... any time, any place.

While I was showering under the shower I heard her making coffee. She even found a clean pair of pants and a shirt I didn't know I had. When I looked in the mirror, so help me, I didn't recognize myself.

"Not bad. Not bad at all," she

said. "A bit of blubber on the gut but the shoulders and legs are still good."

Hot coffee was searing my throat as she took a small notebook from a fancy purse. When she started to read it was as though someone had pushed the clock back two decades.

"Korea, 1952. You were doing well until you wound up with a dishonorable discharge. Some trouble with a grenade being tossed into an officer's tent."

I let her have it. "Look, I was 18 and I was drunk. That man had killed four of the platoon because he was stupid. I only wanted to scare him. Believe me, if I had wanted to knock him off I wouldn't have blown it, drunk or sober."

"I believe you, but let's press on - Kenya, 1954. There you really were a hero. Saving a woman's life and killing 11 Mau-Mau in the process. The papers were full of it. How fortunate that you were there, helping that widow with the farm chores, when they traded the place."

"Crap," I said. "I want them to make love, and that's precisely what we were doing when the bastards hit us."

"Okay, but it was your finest hour. Now to 1964... a mercenary in the Congo. I wouldn't doubt for a moment that you did your job well, though you still managed to lift a railroad fence from a Belgian bank. They never did get the money back."

"No, they didn't. But with Belgian francs running at around 50 to the Australian dollar, plus a lot of pay-off, all I got was about 20,000 in hard money. It lasted six months."

"And after that the big slide. When they knocked you back for Vietnam you started bawling around. You have been thrown out of every bar in town. Is that what you want, Harry?"

She was close by me now. I hadn't noticed her get up because for one moment I was back at smoking Stanleyville, the Scotch sweating out of me as fast as I drank it.

"And what's the alternative?"

"For starters, 50,000 dollars, tax free," she said. "After that, who knows?"

"In exchange for what?"

She waited for what seemed a long time but was really only seconds.

"For blowing up an armed car, that's for what, Harry. We want a professional and you're it, sweet-heart. You're one of the best exterminators in the business."

In some ways I wasn't surprised by what she said. It had to be business. No woman like her would want to fool around with a 41-year-old rover who was on the slope. I was still thinking about it when she leaned across me to pick up an ashtray. It was like a room lens. The viewing was fine, just fine.

"Are you in or out, Harry?"

I told her, sure, I was in. She seemed relieved though with her it was hard to tell. Then she said we had to see a man so we went down the paper-thin stairs and got into a car worth all of 15 grand. When I asked how she knew so much about me she said she had a friend in War Records. That was the only time she mentioned it, then said over.

The man lived in a classy apartment block on the harbor front. The place reeked of moolah and so did the man. He was around my age and looked gym fit. She told him I was in.

"I take it," he said, "that in your line of work you would have fired practically every weapon in the business. How about a bazooka?"

"No worries," I told him. "But why a bazooka?"

"We have a problem." He lit a cigarette as though he had all the time in the world. "Our problem is that we have to do three things simultaneously. We have to stop the armored car, immobilize the crew plus a phone they have in the cabin, and open up the car itself so we can get at the payroll. It occurred to us that a bazooka could do this. What do you think?"

"It depends on the range," I said. "A bazooka isn't an accurate weapon. It hits at or about the target. The car could blow up and we

morning. He took a map from the desk drawer and spread it on the table.

The run was 37 kilometers, the last 16 of which was open country on an army road leading to the base headquarters. That was the section where we would make the hit.

He explained, at some length, how we would do it. At first I saw plenty of problems but after a time I figured we had a 50-50 chance of pulling it off.

He showed me the bazooka. It was a late World War 2 Korean 2.36

driver. He was stout and thick-set and had the typical ferret eyes of an ex-con.

Benny took me about 200 kilometres down coast and another 20 inland through the ruins, winding up on a desolate forestry trail. It was dead quiet, like somewhere in space.

Normally a bazooka requires two men, but with a taped tin OK for one man. I pointed out the target . . . a warehouse outcrop about 60 metres off. The first rocket was way off, blowing up a few square metres of bush and. This seemed to worry Benny. The second shot was better, much better. The third was plumb on.

We got back around 11 pm and I let Benny report in while I headed for the shower. Carl phoned to say he was pleased everything had gone OK. Somewhere, even then, I got the feeling that Carl was a warmer . . . that everything would have to go right . . . that he was no improviser.

I spent most of the evening time in the pool. Sometimes she would come down, mostly in the mornings. We would float and lounge around in the water and be out in the sun. I still couldn't figure her relationship with Carl. I guessed it wasn't the time to ask questions. Later, maybe, but not then.

It day was like the rest of the month. Hot and getting hotter. Benny called for me at 9:30 and said they were set to go. I had one drink and followed him out.

The drive was uneventful. Benny showed his post at the gate and a guy waved as though. He looked a bit edgy and I figured he was Carl's man on the inside. You get a feel about these things.

At the last mile Benny helped me with the bazooka and rockets, then took off round the curve to hide the car and set himself up. It took me a little longer but after 15 minutes I was ready. I could feel my spine ripple the way it always did before some action. It was like old times.

I heard the motor cycle sputter first, right on schedule. Then I saw the bike bounce over the rise and pass through my sights, to be followed almost as quickly by the armored car. To tell with the bike, I thought. The bike was Benny's problem.

I got a rocket off and watched the bottom of the car disappear in a cloud of smoke. While I unloaded I saw the cyclot brake hard, then Benny charging round the bend and firing on the run. The MP was down, but taking. He got up first and made for the rocks on the other side of the



"Hey, buddy! You just went through a red light!"

would get nothing. Maybe it could be done with two angled shots, one up front to stop it, the second to blast off the rear doors. I'll work on it."

He seemed pleased when I told him a bazooka could penetrate up to 10 centimetres of hardened steel. He even poured me a drink and introduced himself. He said his name was Carl and she was Lois. After a few more drinks he outlined the plan.

It didn't sound too complicated, the way he told it. The car carried any army payroll, neatly packaged in envelopes and all folding money. It made the run every second Thursday

inch shoulder type with a tripod. He brought out the fused rockets, six of them, and asked if I wanted more. I told him, no, but it might be a good idea if he found some place nice and quiet where I could blow up a couple of anthills, just to get the feel. He said he would arrange it.

They had even booked a room for me in the apartment-308 on the third level. I hadn't had a room like that since the time I was having a brief affair with the wife of a Belgian millionaire.

It was three days before they dialed me on the house phone and said to come up and meet Benny, my



"The reason I came to see you, doctor, is . . ." "Strip!"

road, pulling his pants as he ran. I knew the type — and been to run up the flag.

The second racket blasted the rear end of the armored car about 30 meters into the air. No one had got out of the vehicle, which meant they were kaput or unconscious. I'd aimed low and wide deliberately. It was one thing to knock off a payroll, another to blast four or five guys I didn't know. But someone had to stop the MP and it wasn't going to be stopped Benny who was lying in the road screaming, with a .38 slug in his belly.

I waited for Lee and Carl to drive up and as soon as they showed I un-lugged down to Benny and grabbed his rifle. I made sure I moved fast and easy because that MP knew his stuff.

I yelled to Carl to unload the payroll while I took care of the nappy cop. He nodded as though still here, but it was Lou who started dragging out the boxes. Carl just stood there, listening to Benny scream, until the MP dropped him with a high one in the shoulder.

I kept waving round rocks until I could see MP and when I got close enough I told him to freeze. There must have been something about the way I said it because he did just that. Then I told him to hug the rockface, hands high, and slapped him hard with the butt of the rifle. His head would hurt for days but he would live to talk about it, and maybe they would give him a medal.

When I got back to the car the boxes had been loaded and Carl was lying down in the back seat, moaning about how much blood he'd lost. I collected the boxcocks and the remaining racket and tossed them in with Carl.

"What about Benny?" she asked

him.

Carl looked about to collapse. It almost made me want to throw up when I thought of guys who joked while someone amputated what was left of an arm that had been sliced by a Mac-Nou piñata.

By then I was starting to add it up. First, there was little, if anything, between her and Carl. Next, I wasn't so sure that Carl was the boss. Sure, he had done all the talking, but he didn't shape up like a mastermind.

It was two hours before the news came over the car radio. Two of the guards in the armored car were under intensive care, along with Benny. Everyone else was shaken up but OK. The most interesting item was the size of the payroll . . . close to \$600,000. That made my \$0 grand small time, especially with Benny off the bandout list. She must have read my mind.

"You know, Harry, you were OK back there. When Benny blew it we were in big trouble. So you get Benny's share. How about that?"

Life is one big poker game. There are times when you have a lousy hand and times when you can sit pat. Sure, I could take my share, and Benny's, and cut out. On the other hand, I could stay in the game. The pool was getting bigger all the time. It was my decision.

"It depends," I said. "For starters, what was Benny's cut?"

"The same as yours — \$50,000."

"It's a matter of simple mathematics," I told her. "I take \$100,000 and you and Carl divide a cool half million. Now you I don't mind but Carl is a write-off. He



"I was playing leapfrog at the company picnic with some of the men in accounting."

won't stop crying until he sees a doctor. Worse, he froze when the alarm started. He hasn't got what it takes, honey. I know it and you know it."

She took a cigarette from me. "You know, Harry, you might be right at that. But for a guy who was here two weeks ago you're like the girl in the cigarette commercial — you've come a long way, baby."

"It ain't just the money," I said. "I'll say one and me. We're the same people. I knew that the first time I saw you."

She looked at me and through me. "I'll think about it, Harry. I'll think about it and hard and talk to you tomorrow."

The next day broke fine and hot. I'd sleep well on some musty hay in the barn and I could smell coffee. She even had bacon and eggs going in a frypan, like a holiday home.

Carl didn't want any breakfast. He said he'd had a rough night and his shoulder was giving him hell. He didn't look anything like the Carl back in that cheap apartment. In a couple more days he would look like a bum. He would be another Harry Carter that was. There was quite a touch about that. The tall swing of the pendulum.

Mid-morning it had climbed over 90, old man, even in the house. She walked over to an old pump in the courtyard and tried it but it was too heavy for her. I gave the handle a few tugs until cold well water was spouting. "Keep at going, Harry," she said suddenly.

I watched her calmly strip naked, honey tanned in the sun. I had my answer then. I knew that Carl was expendable — that it was down to me and her, as I'd suggested. He and her and \$200,000 in unmarked bills.

That afternoon she told Carl we would take him to a doctor but that we would have to be careful. It couldn't be any doctor. We would have to play it by ear. Carl was satisfied. Right then he wasn't thinking about the money. He simply didn't want to die.

We kept listening to the radio. It was three more days before we figured it was safe to move out. In lots of ways they were the best days I could remember. We found a deep hole in the creek and spent most of our time in the water or talking about what we would do with the money or making love in the shade of a leafy oak. One day she told me about the boat.

The boat was about 180 kilometers up the coast. A 20 metre cruiser, gasned up and provisioned. I

figured they had planned to cruise until the heat died down. She didn't have to tell me what she had in mind. We would start out with Carl but only two of us would sleep out.

We left around 2 am, hugging the back roads. I drove and she sat in the back with Carl who soon dropped off. She did the navigating, her brain cool and uncompromised. By 5 am we were paralleling the coast. Suddenly she told me to stop and she pointed down. I saw the boat tied to a small jetty and swinging in the outer tide. Just the boat, the jetty and a small shed. Nothing else and no one around.

SHACK-UP FOR THE BOSS



Once a girl like her been made it with her money she has only two ways to go: 1. marry him; 2. look for another job, which he eventually decides to cut the man off.

"It was brought here yesterday," she said. "The same man will come back in a couple of days to pick up the car and check the area to make sure there's no evidence we were here."

"And what about Carl?"

She shrugged perfect shoulders. "I guess this is the end of the road for Carl. Take him down into the scrub and bury him. There's a shovel in the back of the car."

"You mean he's kept?"

"About an hour ago. A little something in his coffee this morning. It was the best way. Poor Carl could never stand pain."

I did as she said. When I got back to the car I was sweating a river.

"You're doing fine, Harry," she said softly, and moved in close and kissed me. "Now let's drive down

and get everything we need onto the boat."

By the time we finished loading I could tell she knew plenty about boats. Then she found a key which opened the small boat shed even jammed and told me to drive the car in.

Everything was so organized that I knew Carl couldn't have handled it. Carl just found the hired hands. Except me. She had found me. Or was there someone else, way up top, who was waiting for her up coast? No, that couldn't be. Not the way she had acted towards me back at the farm.

I was still looking it around when I felt a boiling ache in my back as I got out of the car, and then I had all the answers.

I turned carefully until I faced her. The automatic was rock steady and no one had to tell me she knew how to use it.

"This is where we part, Harry," she said. "Believe me, it wasn't planned this way. Everyone was going to get his share. But, as you said, it became a case of simple mathematics."

"And there's no one else?" I wasn't stalling for time when I said that. I had to know.

"Just me, Harry. That's the way it will always be because that's the way I am." And she pulled the trigger.

I lay there, my blood boiling up fast in the dry sand floor as she slammed the door. I figured I had about 10 minutes left. My gut was on fire as I got to my feet and opened the car door, almost blocking out Time. Everything took time. Every move was slow, laborious, painful, but somehow I had to do it.

I could hear her panning the motor and I sensed she was thinking of many things but none of them connected with Harry Carter. Harry Carter was a mercenary bum who stalked in and out of her life, pinned.

I managed to open one half of the door and act everything up. One shot, that was all I had. The backshots seemed to weigh a tonne, the rocket half a tonne. The crank was three, maybe four hundred metres off the jetty. A hell of a long shot at any time.

I squeezed and heard the wheeosh as the rocket took off on its low trajectory, becoming like a guided missile.

I saw the hit. One moment the cruiser was there. Next there was nothing. Nothing except the beating, frightened gulls.

I felt better then. Even the rain in my gut was fading fast.



Something savage drew him to the bottom of the world, separating him from the herd, driving him insanelly through packs of killer sharks, giant squid, ambushes of his ultimate enemy—man.

DEATH RUN OF THE LONELY GIANT

THERE WAS LITTLE for him to feed upon in this area of the warm Atlantic surface waters, so the huge sperm whale dove, circling down, searching; 100, 200 feet, down into twilight, body adjusting to the incredible crushing weight of the depths. Down into evening, and there in the gloom he found another hunter. Ten arms of nightmare, each arm lined with suckers, each sucker rimmed with claws, a parrot beak of a mouth that could bite through steel plate, it was the Kraken of ancient Norse songs. The beast that dragged down ships and men. A giant squid.

Fifty feet of writhing flesh, it had no intention of running away. It too was hungry and was hunting.

The sperm whale charged. The giant squid, waited to receive him, arms unfolding umbrella-like for the deadly embrace. Suddenly it squirted ink, a dark, ragged cloud of septa that hung in the water. In the depths the cloud



By STAN PEDERSON

Art By Carl Korman



NOBLE

resembled the squid and predator would go blundering in, expecting to bite something solid. Behind the curtain the squid had gotten to where he could attack a vulnerable spot—and win.

The old whale was horribly scarred from many such battles. He was not fooled by the ink cloud. Swerving with an agility surprising for one of his great bulk, he angled to the side, a plate-size eye rolling to see just what was behind the squid pool but where its maker was.

under the whale's jaw, locking it, preventing him from taking a new bite.

Cold blood versus warm blood. Instinct versus intelligence. A prehistoric fight for survival.

The sperm whale shook his monstrous head, trying to dislodge the adhesive grip. He whirled over and over in an attempt to spin loose. The tentacle caught in his jaw was severed by the ivory teeth, was thrown from the explosion of battle. The Kraken kept trying to shift to

to supply his 10 tons of weight would the ark be hit infrequently. And the harder he fought, the more energy he used. The equation was as simple as that. Dead, his body would be consumed by the Kraken. The squid knew this instinctively.

The whale also knew. He threw up his head in another violent effort to shake his tormentor. Then suddenly his massive propulsion unit went into action, the flukes flailing the water, driving him to the surface at tremendous speed. He broke into the air like an exploding depth charge, pushing the squid out into the sun. For a second this gargantuan sperm whale was tall walking, then with the same suddenness he had started out with, he landed in the air trying to smash the Kraken head-on on the wall of ocean.

The Kraken was swung through the air like a yo-yo on a string, and hit. An oval of white water shot into the air and the shock wave generated by the two giants sent smaller fish swimming in terror from the battle. The tentacle held that could crush a house loosened slightly.

Again the whale hauled out of the water, smashing the Kraken down. Again the whale was using the water as though it was a solid wall, liquefying the Kraken inside its own body. His jaw pressed against the dumbfounding strength of the squid, opened, prying off the stripping. The sperm whale shook himself, loosening the tentacles completely, then unexpectedly charged in, snapping and chomping. Straight into the mass of tentacles the whale penetrated, his massive flukes driving him, his teeth holding his prey from escape. The Kraken writhed, still trying for a new hold with its remaining arms. But it was fighting as it was dying.

The whale took one last voracious gulp, crushed the central nervous system, or rather the central organization that ran the Kraken. The heart was dead and yet it still had movement—which didn't bother the sperm whale at all.

He speared a dense cloud of meat on, whirling cubic feet of flesh air into its rooster-necked lungs. Then he ate, filling his cavernous stomach with tentacles, muscle, eyes and body of the huge squid. Yet he, *Monster Canadian*, was disturbed. Never before had he had such an arduous fight with a giant squid. Never before had his jaw been locked.

But then many strange things had happened to Canadian this year. He hadn't gathered a litter for mating. He hadn't engaged in the courage



"I warned you not to go in there when it's on automatic pilot."

Found, his nose exposed, the squid came slammering out from behind his shield, tentacles extended, reaching, grabbing. He hoped to get a hold around the side of the sperm whale's head, thereby blinding him and locking the terrible jaw.

The whale swirled to meet him and they crashed head-on. On the surface, the waters boiled almost as if some ancient undersea volcano was now coming to life. The sperm whale's lower jaw dropped open like a ship's gunplank, and cone-shaped teeth clamped on a tentacle.

The giant squid didn't have the hold he wanted but he did have a fearsome headlock. Those 10 ft arms of steel band and leather wrapped

where his back could cause fatal damage, but the whale's violent movements prevented him from doing much more than hang on. A few times the Kraken would snap at the massive head of the whale and cut out him sized chunks, but it was blubber that was torn loose, not flesh and blood.

Somehow the Kraken knew he wasn't causing damage. With an icy interminable calm he settled in to maintain the strangle's grip. It would bring him victory if always had.

Locked, the whale's jaw could have been held shut for days by the Kraken. Unfortunately the whale who needed food by the barrel load

meeting battles with other bulls that disrupted the ocean like a continuous barrage of falling bombs. Even underwater where he could hear the calling of his kind — the Locos — singing that had always attracted him before — he was not lured. Instead he roamed where he wilted dragged by a strange restlessness and a fatigue that he had never experienced before and didn't understand.

Finally, he yielded to the demanding urge, and began the journey south, powerful flukes propelling him through glass-smooth seas.

He was of the same species as Moby Dick, the famous "great white whale." But where Moby was white, Catodon's skin was a horribly scarred and pitted chocolate brown.

In size he was officially listed as "gigantic", the largest toothed mammal in the sea, the world, as long as an eight-story building is high. His weight was on the order of a ton per foot insulated by 14-inches. His head was huge, rather flat on the front, larger than a tractor-trailer, and in total, one-third of his size. Inside his head was a core, a cavity that held some 500 gallons of oil. Lighter than water, it was thought to help support the stupendous weight of his head in the water.

Once he had been harped nearly to extinction for his oil, all so



"He didn't have an enemy in the world."

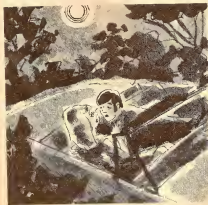
precious and fine it was used to lubricate watches. Now his species was making a comeback. Yet Catodon, in his own time, had better memories of man.

Once, off the Azores he was chasing a school of fish, feeding on them by the narrow lead, herding them together so he could make a run through the rear-sold rows of silver bodies.

Although he both saw and heard the boat, he didn't pay much attention to it. Yet the men inside were paying a great deal of attention to him, trying to row softly, anticipating where his next rush would take him. They were experienced, these whalers and when he made his next pass, a harpoon was thrown into him. It was little more than a pin prick, an annoyance really — until the rope snapped taut and the offset hook they were using turned broadside in his body. Then he felt the stab, tried to run from the agony. He heaved the boat around, dragged it after him as he ran for the open sea, and discovered he was pulling the men with him.

His first instinct was to flee, and when he couldn't outrun the boat, his second instinct was to dive away from it. On the surface the men heaved on the line, fighting the whale to force him to use up his oxygen supply. Catodon played their game, bulldozing them, twisting and turning 300 feet below, not accomplishing anything at all except to exhaust himself. It was down there struggling against the line that he started to use his brain.

It was reasoning on the order of one plus one equals two. The line came from the boat, the men came from the line. He rushed for the surface. The men, believing he was going to breach and spout, pulled at him furiously, preparing to snare it and be taken on another "Nantucket sleigh ride." But Catodon came rearing up and hit the boat with his



"I think sex is too important to be left just to married people."

(Continued on page 79)



Cherry



Honest Cops, Crooked Cops And Underworld
Hijackers Make Him A Clay Pigeon

"I AM THE MOB'S BAGMAN"

By BEN DRAPER
as told to A.W. LANGFORD



DRA: Ed has a lot of money, mostly on the street, with nothing like "Wall Street," the biggest place you could never find himself surrounded by warring Mafia families. (righted here)

WHEN Ben Draper was 17, a prostitute named Chickie Wells gave him fifty dollars to deliver her week's receipts to her Protector, a small-time pimp named Sonny Pans. When Pans learned a high school boy was going to be delivering his money, he arranged for a pair of knob-paired, brain-scrambled pups to take it away from him. In that way he'd get the money Chickie Wells had sent him, then tell her it had never been delivered and force her to

split it up again.

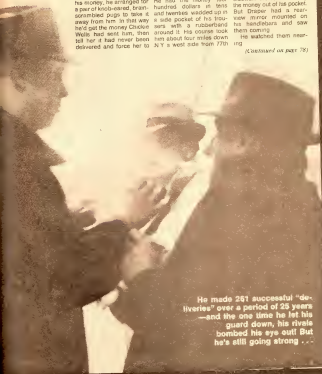
Draper left Chickie Wells' place on a bicycle. He wore a shabby leather jacket and had a few packages in a wire basket on the handlebars, the idea being to make himself look like a run-of-the-mill delivery boy. He had the money four hundred dollars in tens and twenties wedged up in a side pocket of his trousers with a rubberband around it. His course took him about four miles down N.Y.'s west side from 77th

St. to Greenwich Village.

The attempt to take the money was made from a grey coupe some four or five blocks from Draper's destination. The hoods intended herding him up against the curb, bumping him off the bike onto the sidewalk there, and taking the money out of his pocket. But Draper had a rear-view mirror mounted on his handlebars and saw them coming.

He watched them near-

(Continued on page 78)



He made 261 successful "deliveries" over a period of 25 years—and the one time he let his guard down, his rivals bombed his eye out! But he's still going strong...

THE RED CARD

Moscow in the spring. There was no other city quite like it. So long as one had power . . . FICTION/JAMES MCCUTEN

KHRENOV WENT HOME the long way round. Once out of West Berlin — a short but nervous railway journey — the machine took over and moved him effortlessly from one stage to the next, Prague, then Budapest, then across the border into the Ukraine.

When the plane landed at Kiev he sat quietly until the other passengers had gathered their belongings and disembarked. At last he stood up, a slim fair man of 30 or so, untroubled the wrinkles from his well-cut lightweight suit, and walked to the exit, carrying the soft leather briefcase with its cargo of Scotch whisky and cigars.

Here in the south the spring was well advanced and the air was mild, even warm. He felt perspiration start at his armpits, extracting a small wave of Fabergé fruit that rose pleasantly in his nostrils. He walked slowly towards the terminal building, in front of him he could see a small crowd gathered, bunched and nervous, at the inspection barrier. He pushed his way through the crush of bodies until he could see the reason for the delay.

Two cold-faced inspectors blocked the way, before them stood a heavy middle-aged man in the uniform of an army general. His face was red, sweating, and he was talking loudly, blustering. One of the inspectors made a quick chopping motion, and the bluster stopped. The inspector pointed at the capacious pockets of the general's greatcoat, reluctantly the general drew out the contents — several lipsticks, American cigarettes, nylon stockings. Someone in the crowd uttered, and quickly coughed to cover the lapse. The general began to speak again, more quietly now, with a note of wheedling in his voice.

Khrenov smiled a little to himself, and pushed forward to the gate. One of the inspectors stopped in front of him, palms raised to stop him, the other hand resting on the butt of the pistol at his belt.

Still smiling, Khrenov slipped his red card from his pocket and flashed it briefly. The inspector stepped back quickly and saluted. As he passed through the gate Khrenov noted with amusement the sudden look of fear and apprehension on the general's face.

He had an hour to wait for the Moscow plane and he spent it quietly, drinking coffee, and letting his thoughts drift easily in the relaxed aftermath of action. It was good to be going home, good to smell the old familiar smells, good to be back in the known environment, in his special place again, in his own world. It could have ended very differently, of course, had things not gone so well in West Berlin, but better not think of that. There had been no hitches, the operation had gone with precision — planning, execution, withdrawal . . . flawless, untroubled.

And now he would be rewarded, he had no doubt.

The smile returned, and he reached into the briefcase for one of the cigars.

He sat, calm and contented, in the midst of the blue and fragrant smoke.

Moscow in the spring. There was no other city quite like it . . . not for him, at least. He walked slowly through the crowded streets, weaving at will, the pretty girls, purposeful coffee men, the rash and clutter of the traffic. For a moment he stopped to watch the avowedly queer moving slowly forward in the warm sunlight outside the banks of Lenin. He noticed a look or two of suspicion and alarm from the people in the queue, for today he was wearing his uniform. And that was part of it, too, the feeling of belonging, of power, of importance.

He didn't wear the uniform often, of course. But today was a special occasion. Yet even without the uniform it didn't matter. For he



always carried the red card, and that was enough, more than enough — the warmth of his authority, the token of his belonging, the badge of his power. He was only a lieutenant, once, yet there was hardly a general in the land who would not see aside, in respect, and yes, in fear, at the sight of that red card.

He was early, and he took his time, enjoying the sunshine, the sights of the city, the sense of purposeful leisure in his own stride.

Half-an hour later he glanced at

his watch, and quickened his pace. Time was passing, and he graded himself on his punctuality. But even so, he stopped for a moment when the building came into view. It never failed to impress him, however often he saw it, to awe him a little, even, with its aura of latent power and menace, a menace which lay inherent in the stone of its ugly facade — a rambling confused complex of rooms, passages, chambers, cells, offices — the Lubinka, heart of the KGB. The

wedged apex of its blunt triangle faced him across the broad street. And here, as always, there were fewer pedestrians, and those there were hurried quickly about their business. Did they avert their eyes, or was it just his imagination? Several taxis crossed the area, and he recognized one of the drivers — an agent watching for people too interested, too curious, too easily taking, perhaps, the prohibited photographs.

Inside, the familiar smell closed





"The script is terrible, Malinova. I only hope our set designers can come up with a bedroom that will do it justice."

about him — rank Balkan tobacco, overboarded rooms, stale perspiration — and he felt the muscles of his shoulders and neck tense and then relax in acceptance; this was his world, his home, his life. He strode briskly along the bare, shabby corridors, nodding to acquaintances here and there, until he came at last to the well-remembered door. Pushing, he flaked the grey dust from his tarnished boots with an immaculate handkerchief, then knocked quickly.

"Come!" The guttural syllable stifled the thin purring of the door. He opened it and stepped inside.

"Fedor Pavlovich!" Novikov, his bulk bursting from the tightly buttoned tunic of his colonel's uniform, rose from the deep velvet chair and moved across the desk to greet him. As the heavy hands gripped his shoulders, Khrenov looked down into the small, clever brown eyes, oddly liquid, intelligent eyes in the ravaged face; he found it difficult to believe, as he often did, that this was the man who had, in some remarkable way, survived the days of Boris, of Stalin, of Malenkov, and still remained a powerful force in the shabby corridors of the Lubanka.

"Sit down, boy!" Novikov pushed him into a chair. Khrenov smiled and said nothing, took the offered cigarette.

"So you got him, eh? Drarov? We heard. But tell me about it! Where? How?"

Khrenov leaned forward to catch the flame of the lighter.

"In the street," he said, "outside

his hotel. The cold smoke curled up 'Heaven — the rush hour'."

"And no guards?"

Khrenov shrugged. "Twenty metres away I was gone before they noticed anything."

"You gave him the hepatic?"

Khrenov nodded. "He kept going — five or six paces at least, long enough for me to get away, get clear."

Novikov laughed. "The old ways are best, eh? Not too complicated, no machinery to go wrong, eh?" He sat down behind the desk again.

There was silence for a moment.

"What about the others?" asked Khrenov. "Family, friends, that sort of thing?"

"Aaaaaagh..." Novikov coughed and thumbed out the cigarette. "Nothing," he said. "Hush! We've picked up most of them. The others won't last long. You know how the networks act."

Novikov tapped the desk with his scarred knuckles, suddenly serious. "Good work," he said. "It was good work. And we know it. We appreciate it. You'll get your captaincy within a month."

Khrenov felt himself flush with pleasure. It was neither the rank itself — few people would even know, for he seldom wore the uniform — and it wasn't the money, for he was paid more than most doctors and university professors, no, it was the knowledge of trust, of approval...

"Thank you, colonel."

"No thanks necessary. You deserve it. And it's just the beginning." He smiled at Khrenov. "We know. We watch. And we recognize the good ones. Now take a couple of weeks off, enjoy yourself. Report Tuesday week." He bent his head over an open file.

The interview was ended.

As he passed once more through the corridors Khrenov could feel that the news had preceded him. The glances he received held admiration, and a hint of envy. The sweetness of a bang over him like the aroma of a good cigar.



"You'll be charmed by its subtle bouquet, but I think the heady taste will knock you on your ass."

He stepped out into the sunshine again, and felt that he owned the whole great wonderful city spread before him.

Late afternoon sunlight probed the edges of the drapes and spilled a dull glow on to the wide bed, reaching the woman's naked skin softly. She leaned on one elbow, looking down at Khrenov, who lay supine, eyes closed. She reached out and touched the bare chest with her fingertip, the movement stirring his breasts so that one dark nipple brushed his shoulder.

"Tell me," she said.

"Mmmmm."

"Tell me."

"About what?" Khrenov shifted a little on the damp sheet.

"You know — about Berlin. What you did there."

He smiled a little. "That killed a man? Why, Tony? Why should that interest you?" He opened his eyes, looking up into the pale face peered above him. "I shouldn't have told you that much." Even now he didn't quite know why he had told her. Normally he spoke to no one about his work. And now — to a girl he'd met only a few days before? He had seen her in the street, twice, during the first week after his return from Berlin, finally, the third time, intrigued by the combination of boldness and restraint in her gaze, he had approached her, taken her for coffee, a drink, and, finally, back to his apartment. There she had exploded against him, an erotic storm of flesh. Why? He wondered. Perhaps one of those sudden, inexplicable chemical reactions between people — it happened sometimes. But with her there was a hint of something more, a reserve behind the dark eyes, she was not a virgin, yet there was a certain lack of expertise behind the wild caresses, an oddly touching naivety. She continued to intrigue him.

She persisted now, moving closer to him on the bed, touching the hair of her thighs to his legs.

"Tell me! How did you do it?"

"But why?"

She ran her finger down from his chest, tracing the line of down that descended towards his groin. "Because it... sometimes... makes... it somehow different, special, when we do this..." Her head slid away.

He smiled again, watching the fine beads of sweat on her upper lip, conscious of his body responding to her touch.

"We call it the 'butter,'" he said, "but it can be anything — an omelet,

a bicycle spoke, a steel knitting needle."

"What did you use?" She tightened her fingers, and he began to breathe a little more quickly.

"A knitting needle." He was in a hurry to tell it, now, to get it out of the way. "Sharpened at one end, a cork over the other for a handle. Inside a paper bag."

"You push it in, and the bag crumples. You pull off the cork, inside the bag, and walk away. That's all." He drew a long, lingering breath.

"How long does it take?"

"A few seconds, half a minute, maybe!"



"I had also often in nine different cities — then someone made my roller skates."

"And where do you put it in?"

"I'll show you." He pushed himself upright, took her shoulders in his hands and pressed her back until she lay beneath him, her black hair fanned on the crumpled pillow.

"Here." He touched a spot just below her left breast, sinking down on her. His hand moved down the smooth column of her body to the swell of the hips. "And here... and here... and here..."

Then it was her turn. "Aaaaaah..."

Later they sipped coffee and

listened to music on his record player. He played his records of Yarn, and she liked them.

"He's singing at the Opera," he said. "Would you like to go?"

She laughed. "They're booked out for months ahead."

"But would you like to go? Tonight?"

"Of course."

"Very well, we'll go."

"But how?"

"Never mind. Leave it to me."

"Are you serious?"

"Certainly."

She sprang from the bed and began to dress hurriedly. He watched

her for a little before he spoke.

"Where are you going?"

"Home to change."

"There's no hurry. You must wait for me, anyway."

"Wait for you? Why?"

"You can't leave the building. They won't let you."

She froze, breasts momentarily slack against the cups of the unfamiliar braiders. "Who won?"

"Haven't you seen the guards at the door of the block? Nearly all the tenants are deportant people. The guards know you're with me, they

(Continued on page 73)



GLAD RAG DOLL





THE OWEN GUN STORY

At the outbreak of World War II there were two sub-machineguns in Australia. At the cessation of hostilities 45,000 Owen guns had helped turn possible defeat into positive victory.

ARTICLE/Michael Young

THE MEN of the Australian patrol lay silent in the New Guinea jungle, in the shade of the low scrub, looking out across the wide grass clearing. Out there, waist-deep in the tall kumai grass, the Japanese platoon they were waiting for was approaching their ambush.

The Japanese infantrymen came forward in open order, rifles held high, clear of the grass. The Australian sergeant picked out their officer by the pistol holster on his belt. He and his men watched over their sights, letting the Japs walk closer, closer.

They could sense the Japanese eyes scanning the scrub where they lay. Then, all at once, a Jap soldier gave a shrill cry and stopped, pointing. And at that moment, in accordance with the sergeant's orders, the Australians opened fire.

The first burst from the Bren light machine gun cut the Japanese officer

Private Evelyn Ernest Owen, 2/17 Infantry Battalion, of Wollongong, New South Wales, inventor of the Owen Sub-machinegun, holding the first experimental model, developed in June, 1939. The weapon was .22 calibre, and except for a few mechanical parts, could be manufactured without special equipment, using the parts of an old .22 calibre rifle. The gun, together with the original of all subsequent models manufactured by Messrs John Lysaght of Port Kemble, is on display in the Australian War Memorial.

down, and the ranks behind him were thinned by a rugged volley from the Australian 303s. But the Japs knew their ambush drill — attack, straight in! They bounded forward sideways through the kumai, firing from the hip.

The Australian sergeant thumbed his charge lever forward and squatted the trigger. A stream of lead slugs sprayed the Japanese from the muzzle of the jolting weapon. Man after man fell headlong on the kumai grass, chopped down by the fire.

The Japanese charge faltered and died, there in the grass. The Bren was clumsy to aim at close quarters. The 303 rifles could only get away a shot at a time, but the sub-machinegun in the hand of the sergeant and two other Digbys were easier of aim to handle and they poured out bullets in bursts like water from a hose.

Some of the Japanese took cover

in the long grass — from view, but not from fire. When they shot back, the Australian fire found them. The sub-machineguns cut down every man who kept coming for the trees.

"Cease fire!" the sergeant bellowed, and the hammering reports stopped and silence fell across the jungle again.

The dozen Australians counted and marched the 25 dead Japanese out on the grass. They made stretchers for two of their own number who'd been wounded. Four men to a stretcher, a scout leading, the sergeant covering their rear, they fell back to their safe harbor position.

In his head the sergeant balanced the losses on each side. Two for 25. It had been a successful ambush. The deadly close-quarters fire of the sub-machineguns had made it just about perfect.

The sub-machineguns were Australian-made, like the Bren and the 303 rifles. But unlike the other weapons, they were Australian-designed too. They were Owen machine carbines, first used in the vicious fighting for the Japanese beach-heads at Buna, Samarai and Gona.

The Owen sub-machinegun design first came to the Australian Army's attention before the war. Its



New Guinea, Dugay Ridge, 22 March, 1944 - Younger Peteron firing an Owen Gun.

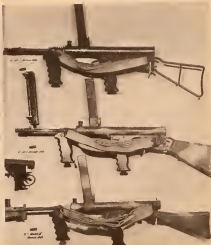
Exhibits Australian War Memorial Canberra, AWT, 27 March, 1992. A display presented to the Memorial by Lyngbait Pty Ltd, Port Kembla Branch showing the various models of the Owen Gun produced during World War II.

inventor, Mr Evelyn Owen, a 24-year-old motor mechanic from Wollongong, showed a model of it to a workshop ordnance officer at Sydney's Victoria Barracks.

The ordnance staff made some notes about features of the .22 calibre model, but Owen was told that the Army wasn't very interested as it Owen took the model home again and worked on the design a bit more in his spare time.

On the outbreak of the war, Owen enlisted in the Second AIF. He'd almost despaired of attracting attention with his weapon, after a fruitless correspondence with the Army. In September, 1940, he was on final leave home before his battalion called for the war in the Middle East. He decided to make one last bid, and put his revised working model in a sugar bag, outside the flat of Mr V A Wardell, the manager of Lyngbait steelworks at Port Kembla.

Wardell examined the gun, and realised that its simple design meant



(Continued on page 47)

NIGHT OF THE ONION

Jorgensen saw the big Valiant's headlights, coming round hard behind his dune buggy. He still had to keep on with the crazy duel...

FICTION/Philip Gould

JORGENSEN GOT to the beach late on the Friday afternoon. He turned a little way off the track, and parked the VW buggy in a hollow behind some bushes, out of the wind. He made camp on the other side of the bushes, looking down on the sea. He pitched the tent where the morning sun would wake him.

By then it was too late for any fishing. He made a meal out of the supplies he'd brought with him. He

went for a walk along the beach in the moonlight, round to the rocks. It looked okay out there.

He thought that was enough for one night. He knew he had to take it very easy. That was what the doctors had told him. He had to watch things for another month yet. He went back and turned in early, tucking himself in the nylon bag on the warm sand.

Before he went to sleep he thought, it was a pity he was alone out there. It was a pity Max or one of the other guys couldn't make it. It would have been best if he'd had Connie to come. That was just the way it was, though...

Hours later Jorgensen woke suddenly. He rolled himself on his

elbows in the bag, listening. That was a car's exhaust. A big car was coming up the road across the marsh.

He heard the engine-note change on the far side of the hill. It was over the bridge and on the way up to the coast. He drew aside the flap of nylon at the end of the tent, and saw a flicker of light in the sky over the hill as the headlight beams glanced up.

Jorgensen looked at his watch. It was nearly midnight. The full moon was overhead, showing from behind a cloud. He thought it was a little late for anybody to be making a camp. They had to be stopping, because there was no way right through on that road. Maybe they were lost, though.

Anyway, it was none of his



human. It was pretty unlikely that they'd run into the buggy or drive over his tent. He lay down and closed his eyes again. He couldn't help keeping on listening to the engine.

Now it was on top of the hill. The driver changed gear. It was coming down the slope toward him. It was heading past along the track through the dunes, out toward the point. The engine's sound died.

Then he tensed and lifted his head quickly. He heard the scream.

It sounded like a cry for help. It was a good way off, and he couldn't be sure. But it sounded like the word, and then another cry of pain or fear. The voice was high-pitched. It sounded like a girl.

Jorgensen was wide awake now. His head brushed the nylon tent. There were other voices, male voices, then another scream. It tailed off quickly.

Jorgensen had to force himself to think clearly. The cries could mean a dozen different things. Maybe they were just looking around, the girl was just playing up. He'd look a fool if he rushed up to the rescue and they all turned on him.

There was another thing. He wasn't in too good shape himself yet. His ribs were still knitting. His

shoulders were still a little weak from inactivity. And apart from that, he was only medium height, lightly built. And there'd be a few of them up there.

And he remembered the things he'd read in the papers, stories from America about the people who heard some girl being attacked and closed their minds to it, and did nothing. That was one way out. It was all up to him.

While he was thinking, he'd crawled out of the tent. Somehow or other he'd made up his mind the other way. He started walking up through the dunes.

The full moon was in a clear sky now. The night air was cool on his face. The sand in the troughs between the dunes made a light crunching sound at each step. He heard loud talk and laughter up ahead.

"Hey, come on."

"Hey, yeah, come on, he a good gal."

"Come on, we won't hurt you."

Jorgensen heard a kind of angry sobbing voice.

"Come on, take it off," one guy said.

"Come on, you hold her and I'll do it."

"No, I want to do it."

They were just ahead, around the next dune. Jorgensen could see the moonlight gleaming on the roof of their car. They didn't know he was there.

He went up the side of that dune on hands and knees. He crouched in the fringe of dry grass on top and looked down the far side. There they were, four of them together, bending over a figure on the ground.

The girl was already half stripped. Jorgensen could see the white gleam of her legs in the moonlight. One of the youths was holding her shoulders down, and two others were holding her legs. The fourth youth was between them, bending over her. She was twisting, moving in their grasp.

Four against one. That was what they didn't explain to you about all these other cases. He wouldn't do her much good if he ran straight down there and waded into them. He wouldn't do himself much good, either. There had to be something.

One of the guys grunted and rolled back. It looked like the girl had landed a kick. She thrashed free for a moment, with only one guy holding on to her arm. Her shoulders and breasts were bare, and what was



left of her clothing was in a tangle around her waist.

She made it to her feet and swayed a few steps along the beach. Jorgensen tensed, ready to step in. But then one of the guys recovered and lunged forward, and tackled her around the waist and bore her to the ground.

The others shouted and clumped in

group a hundred yards away, then opened the driver's door, found the brake, let it go.

They'd left the Valiant at the side of the track, where it ran down another small hill toward the end of the handland. There was a rough downhill run into the dark just behind it. He peeped, yanked the wheel, pushed again harder. He heard

of the dance again, stumbling in the loose sand in the dark. He could hear them, just over the top from him.

"Hey, what about her?" one guy called.

"No, leave her. Nasser mind that."

"Yeah, get the car, come on."

That was the last guy to run. He probably owned it.

Jorgensen scrambled through the coarse grass over the crest of the dune. Three of them were running down the far side, and the first one was nearly at the rolling car. The fourth youth was still holding the girl pinned.

Jorgensen worked round behind him. He was looking down toward the others with the Valiant, and he didn't turn until it was too late. Jorgensen saw a flat sideways at his head, before he could duck.

The youth fell sideways and Jorgensen dove on him, punching at his face. He was bigger, but Jorgensen was on top. He had no chance to dodge or fight back.

It was no time for close fighting in the space of a few seconds. Jorgensen used fists, knees and boots to do as much harm as he could. Then he turned to the girl.

She was shaking back with her hands covering her mouth. Her face white in the moonlight and her eyes were wide. Her hair looked black where it trailed over her shoulders and breasts.

"Come on," said Jorgensen. "Come on, quick!"

He could hear the other three youths arguing somewhere down the hill. Apparently they'd stopped the Valiant all right.

"I did bloody put it on," one of them said loudly.

"How come it rolled then?"

"I don't know. Because I bloody hid it on. I remember don't it."

Their voices were loud in the still night air. Jorgensen heard a car door slam.

"Do you reckon somebody else did it?" one of them said.

The girl was still dazed. There was no time to worry about that now. Jorgensen grabbed her arm and peaked her to her feet, and dragged her up the side of the dune.

"Frank!" one of them called. "Hey Frank!"

He thought he heard the guy he'd beaten calling something back. By that time they were starting up the side of the second dune. The girl was staggering, heavy on her arm.

"I can't," she said. "I can't, can't..."

She was crying. Then on the far side of that dune she tripped and fell, bringing him to his knees with her.



"Get to get in shape — I'm thinking of making a come-back."

The girl was pinned to the ground, naked and writhing. They went on his right now. On his left was their car. Jorgensen glanced at the car.

Then he looked again, at the way it was parked, the lie of the slope there. Then he was on his feet, running round behind the crest of the dune toward it. If he could get there away from the girl somehow.

It was a five-year-old Valiant, turned up with chrome and GT stripes. All the windows were wound down. He looked at the struggling

girl's voice rose in a choking scream.

"No! Oh, no, no..."

The Valiant was moving. The heavy car was lurching back on the uneven track, the open door swinging, cranking. Jorgensen jumped aside, back toward the shadow of the dune.

He heard one of them shout. "Hey, look at the car! Look out!"

"Hey, look, it's rolling!"

"Don't just stand there, you dumb pish!"

He was scurrying around the back

"Oh, no, no," she sobbed.

He pulled her against him to quieten her. He could hear the youths shouting. By now they must have worked out what had happened. They'd be coming after them in a minute.

The girl had her face buried in her hands. She hardly appeared to notice Jorgensen there. She was a big girl, nearly as tall as he was, and probably heavier. He'd have a hard job if he had to carry her.

Four against one. If he had a gun. But he didn't, and he'd never learned how to use one, anyway. He had no kind of weapon at all. Even his knives were back with the fishing gear. All he could do now was run.

He stood up and looked back, watching for movement across the wavy black-and-gray landscape of the dunes under moonlight. There was one guy, near toward the road. There was another fifty yards on his left. They'd spread out and they were moving down on a search.

He saw his tracks on the wind-smoothed sand, a scribble of black marks of shadow. If they found those . . .

Jorgensen yanked the girl to her feet. She was still sobbing, clenching the torn remains of her dress around her. He pulled her hands away from her face and slapped her twice to break the hysteria.



"I can't help making a noise. It's a damned lolly sandwich."

"Look, come on now. We've got to get away. OK? OK?"

He was speaking in a loud whisper, glancing back over the sand. He saw the girl's eyes clear and she nodded. She was making an effort to control herself now.

"OK. Along here then."

It was too late to go over the top of the next dune now. They'd show out on the pale sand. Jorgensen led the girl along the hollow instead,

toward the rushing murmur of the surf. Maybe they could get out to one side of them.

Jorgensen's heart was pounding. The girl was still like a dead weight on his arm, and the loose sand seemed to stick at his feet. He heard one of the youths call out something behind him, along the dune.

"Over here," another guy called. He sounded only a few yards away.

There was a darker patch on the sand ahead, where the coarse grass was sprouting through. Jorgensen dragged the girl forward and pulled her down. There was some kind of a shallow channel there, probably the run-off of a minor. They huddled side by side, close together, the girl's head down, Jorgensen's half raised on the alert.

"I don't know," the guy above them was shouting.

The guy at the far end of the dune shouted something Jorgensen didn't catch.

"No. No, there's nothing here."

Jorgensen wondered how much the youth up there would see of them if he looked. It was no good thinking about that, though.

The girl's eyes were wide and blank a few inches from his own. He had his arm across her back to hold her still and he knew her to question her. Her mouth was warm and moist. After a second she responded. He held the line and saw her eyes droop shut.

He could feel the warm softness of her arm and shoulder next to him. He had his leg half across him to shelter her. The touch of her was (Continued on page 61)



"How attached were you to Daddy?"

He Snatched A Nazi General For Ransom

Wayne Pittarski earned a strange rep, the deadliest rottenest egg in World War II—and both the U.S. and German armies agreed on that ...



MEANEST G.I. IN THE U.S. ARMY

By LEE BREWSTER

A front-line court martial is almost unavoidably stacked against the accused. Judges, prosecutors, the officers and EM on the jury and defense attorneys are all but certain to be battle-weary, hungry for decent food and a hot shower, bone-sore from sleeping on the ground, horny, homesick and scared that in the next sniffling barrage a shell may have their name on it.

All of this makes them super-mean. They are likely to be in a frame of mind that will compel them to sentence a man to death by firing squad for smoking near a gasoline dump.

In the case of Pvt. Wayne Pitaraki, they had something they could really get their teeth into.

Number one charge was the near fatal beating of two sergeants, one of whom had suffered such severe brain damage that he was given a medical discharge and a 100% disability pension. Charge number two was impersonating one of the very sergeants he had



Many Kraut generals (depicted above) were captured in combat but only Pitaraki's "catch" was offered chance to buy his freedom...



stopped. Number three was going AWOL. Number four was stealing government equipment, first a jeep and then a five-ton truck. Chaper number five was emptying the sergeant's pockets as they lay unconscious and bleeding. There were, in addition, seven more charges against Pvt. Finnick, 12 in all, and the major who was acting as the prosecutor was set to read them, but after number five the presiding colonel stopped him and said they would be enough, if they needed the others they could always go back to them.

About the only person in that dilapidated room (in the only building left standing in what had once been the village of Louvain, France) who was not impressed by the number and gravity of the charges was the prosecutor himself. When the colonel asked if he had anything to say before the trial began Finnick got up from the dusty bench and said, "Yess, Colonel, I thought I had killed those two bastards. That's how come I'm away."

Wayne Finnick had made trouble for the army from the very first day he was drafted. During the train ride from Chicago to Fort Dix, NJ, and while still in civilian clothes, one of the players in a poker game accused him of cheating; he had suggested the game and provided the cards. Finnick exploded at the accusation. Call him a thief? No man in this world could call him a thief and get away with it. However, when the MP lieutenant came over and asked to see the cards, Finnick threw them out the window of the speeding train saying that he didn't want to play cards with a bunch that would call an innocent man a thief. By that time he was over 1400 ahead. And that night, while the man who had accused him of cheating lay sleeping, Finnick stepped on his hand, which had dropped to the floor of the car, and broke one of his fingers.

In Fort Dix, Wayne Finnick found it difficult to awaken at reveille and the company sergeant had to rudge him in the ribs with a foot. The first time that happened, Finnick slowly opened one eye, looked straight up at the Texas-born sergeant and said, "Sergeant, you do that one more time and I'll kick them humorholes of yours clear up to your teeth."

Of course, the following morning Finnick awoke up again and, again, the sergeant nudged his ribs with the toe of his boot. Finnick jumped up, grabbed the sergeant's foot and twisted it so that it fractured. The action landed him in the guard house

— Finnick had been in the army three days — and earned him a restriction to camp for the rest of his basic training, and the job of clearing out the grease traps in the mess kitchen every Saturday, and spraying the cockroaches behind the kitchen wall panels every Sunday.

When Finnick tried to drown the senior mess sergeant in a soap bottle, the camp's adjutant department sent him to see a psychiatrist. But before the doctor could ask one question,

WITH A NUDIST HERE, AND A NUDIST THERE, OLD MACDONALD HAD A FARM . . .

An Honolulu, Hawaii, judge recently ruled that members of the Hawaii Nudist Club could continue to occupy property they leased only if they used it for farming.

So the 1400 nudist plan to do exactly that.

The ruling came about after trustees of the state that owns the property won a court judgment prohibiting non-agricultural use of the 2400-acre area, which is undeveloped and on the beachfront. The nudist club had been using the land for more than two years without any problems — thus the last ruling would begin giving the nudists unwanted publicity, arousing antinudist sentiment.

George Mueller, who leases the property for the club, said "It's really nice — the wives and fathers and children, and the animals out here. It's the closest thing to heaven there is, and it's getting spoiled with all this backing."

The club's president, Larry Bink, said that the nudist plan to have an agricultural department and will grow lettuce, tomatoes, radishes and watermelons on 40 acres of the land, with profits from sale of the produce to be donated to a nearby hospital.

Pvt. Finnick pointed a finger at him and said, "Listen, you effing dog, you try to touch my peter and I'll break every goddam bone in your effing body!"

The interview ended there. "Man is obviously a mulefucker," the psychiatrist noted on his records. "His aim is to receive a psychiatric discharge from the army. I would recommend court-martial punishment."

So in addition to the weekend mess hall assignments, Finnick was required to clean the latrines in the canteen every evening after it closed.

But despite Finnick's meanness and inability to get along with people, he was a good soldier. For

one thing, he was a born marksman. Not as good as the country boys who had been shooting the eyes out of squirrels ever since they could hold a

22, but he had a feel for weapons. You could tell the way he worked on the firing range. He fired slowly and with a purpose. When the first shot went wild he corrected whatever he was doing, wrong and gradually worked his way to the centre of the target. And once he found the bull's-eye he didn't let go. Also, without much instruction he seemed to be able to strip and put together any gun that was handed to him. His weapons were, by far, the best-maintained in the company.

And out in the field Finnick could do anything anyone else could do, only better. Twenty-mile hikes were nothing to him. He could double-time, with full field pack, for hours and when some sergeant trying to get back at him for his earlier behavior ordered him to do 100 push-ups, with full pack, Finnick could drop to the ground and complete it in a few minutes, barely breathing hard when he got up. In the field he could move as quickly as an ant even though he had never been in a woods before in his life.

Wayne Finnick had no friends, as far as anyone knew. He seldom talked to anyone. When asked a question, he growled back an answer if he felt like it. The only time anyone saw him laugh was when a man in his company shot the gunnery instructor in a peevishness accident. Finnick received only three letters all the time he spent in basic training, and he tore all three of them up without even opening the envelope. When someone asked him why he did that he answered that they were just from his mother and all she wanted was for him to send her money. So when he ripped the third letter up several of the men in the barracks retrieved it and put the pieces together. It was written in pencil, the writing scrawly and heavily legible. It said, "Dear son. Why'n you send me money since you got in the army? All the other soldiers send." It was signed, "Yee mother."

One more thing about Wayne Finnick. It was guessed that he was a thief. Not money, or at least as far as anyone knew. He drank bottles of whiskey in his bed after lights out. It was said that he stole them from the butcher officer's quarters. He stole his shaving cream, soap, razor blades and cigarettes from the canteen after he finished clearing the latrines. Men in the barracks accused him of

(Continued on page 54)





THE GOLGOTHA OF SADDLEBAGS

WHEN GALLIPOLE SMITH, the half-caste post-office, first saw the suspension bridge on the Hawkins he gave a short laugh.

"Whoever slung it that way," he said, "slung it to last."

But being a man of poise and post-splitting he had eyes only for the four streams that took the bridge's weight. They were 14 inches square in the section and were cut from Australian hardwood. Time had already weathered their sides with moss and a yellow lichen and birds had capped their tops with their snowy droppings. Tied to any one of these a battenship could have ridden out a gale, but the rest of the bridge was only a hammock of planks and No. 8 wire.

The bridge was thought to have led once to a sawmill's office on the far side of the river but when Gallipole Smith came there was no office and no sawmill, and the bridge led only to the bank opposite. Only 17 doublet nailwork houses remained, and because houses were everywhere about 15 of these had been already taken.

Gallipole came in the summer, driving up the two pines tracks in a borrowed V8, and he brought with him two rifles, a pig dog and a wife. By the end of the summer he had added a horse called Saddlebags to his belongings, but his wife had left and the dog had got lost chasing a hare.

Everyone at Hawkins Bend knew that when Gallipole was with the Maoris he laughed easily and that when he was with the whites he hardly laughed at all, but what they did not know was that when he was with his white wife a buttressman in him crept out. And it was a buttressman his wife could not stand for ever.

The note she left him set things out clearly:

I can put up with weatherboards without paint and walls without

At the Bend anybody's trouble is everybody's trouble. And Saddlebags was in trouble...

FICTION/B. A. Wilson

wallpaper. I can put up with a city of 33 whistlers and the no electricity and the no streets. I can put up with men who only work when they feel like it and a range that won't show and will peek and ramble and rotter for a change. I can put up with windows without any glass to look out of, but I can't put up any longer with you and your buttresses.

Gallipole screwed up the note and when he threw it away he did not care where it fell. But the note eventually blew down a man-made track near the stream where it was picked up by Mrs Hobbs. Mrs Hobbs read it and showed it to Bill Mandlin's wife who showed it within the hour to Mrs Bruce. Mrs Bruce read the letter aloud to her husband and took it over to Mrs Fardloth who was not long out from London. And soon everyone at The Bend knew that Gallipole Smith had been a better man in his own home and that was why his wife had left him. But what he was better about no one knew at all.

Gallipole still laughed with the Maoris and was still reserved with the whites. Sometimes he joked about the wife who had left him but he joked in a round-about way that included mention of his horse.

"You can rely on a horse," he would say, or, "Where I go, Saddlebags goes," and the men knew what he meant. Indeed the rapport between the man and the brown bumbler he had broken in was a wonderful thing to see, for the man and the horse were never seen apart.

At one time Gallipole was boasting of this thing about his horse when Clubfoot Regan said:

"I bet you a quid he won't follow

you over the bridge, Gallipole," and Gallipole, who was the same amount drunk as Clubfoot, said quickly:

"You're on, Clubfoot. I bet you he will. He'll walk through Hell if I whittled him."

The planks of the suspension bridge ran lengthways and were kept from spreading by thick wooden cleats. Gallipole ran his hands along the two side strands of No. 8 wire. Then he knelt and looked at the planked strands of No. 8 wire under the cleats and made some quick calculations. He walked to the other side of the bridge, which was the town side, and whittled his horse.

Saddlebags was so fool and he hesitated, for he wanted something was amiss. Gallipole whittled again. Saddlebags tested the decking with his forelegs and where his forelegs felt safe his hind legs followed. The wires of the sides touched his ribs and the planks were under the cleats were very tight. He was in the middle of the bridge when his hind legs went through the planking.

When the horse felt his hind legs going he struck at the bridge deck with his feet fast and they too went through. Pieces of planking broke off and spun down into the river. And there Saddlebags roared, with the lower part of his chest on the rotted timber and with his hind legs poking through them. He held his head high without whinnying and his ears were pointed forward at Gallipole Smith.

"I got you 10 bob," said Clubfoot gleefully. "We only got halfway."

Then Clubfoot saw the sweat on Gallipole's face and he shut up. He looked along the bridge at the horse wedged in the broken planks and again at the sweat on Gallipole's face. And he saw what Gallipole saw.

"He followed you all right," said Clubfoot weakly. "I saw you the whole quid."

At The Bend anybody's trouble is everybody's trouble unless a person

keeps his trouble to himself, and this was a trouble that could not be hid. Even the women and children turned out and they stood with the men downstrung of the bridge where the back was low, and their eyes were all turned up at the horse. From here to time they switched their gaze to Gallipoh Smith who leaned against one moon-covered streamer and looked only at his horse.

Chubfoot Ragan hobbled down from the bridge and joined the crowd.

"Ah—" he began, and the sound was like a sobbing in his throat. "He only got halfway but I said I'd pay him the full stipend." His eyes shrank off under their staves, and he looked as if he himself wished to shrink off but could not because he was a part of the thing. From time to time his good leg made snapping motions but his bad leg seemed caught in a trap. He looked up at the horse and went round to the back of the group to put something between himself and what he saw.

Then everybody saw Gallipoh walk his way out to the horse and after a while go back. He leaned once



"You shut up, Chub!"

more against the thick streamer post and stared along the bridge where he had been. From below the profile of his face seemed carved from pale stone, and a sigh went up from the group.

"Gallipoh shouldn't of done that," and one man "That were could of broke."

The sigh and the man's words loosened the tightness in the group. There was a soft stirring as the men got ready to talk, but no one could find anything fitting to say. After a time the same man said:

"That horse is all of 30 feet up!"

The women went away to prepare dinner for the men and later called to them to come. But Gallipoh, who had no one now to call him, stayed where he was.

Bill Mandlin's wife climbed up to the bridge with Gallipoh's coat and a mug of hot tea, and she glanced once quickly at the horse before she hurried away. Gallipoh drank the tea thirstily but his eyes over the rim of the mug never once left the horse, and in his eyes were a brightness and a questioning.

In the early evening the people the the band drifted back to where they had stood earlier. Then time they wore coats or sweaters, for the night promised to be cold. They watched Saddlebags turn bronze in the last of the twilight and for some minutes it seemed as if what was up there was only the life-size statue of a horse. And then they saw his color deepen as the light drained from the sky and he looked black and remote against the early stars. Some said the Southern Cross hung above his head in a remarkable way as though he had been given a five-pointed crown.

That night before she went to bed Mrs Chubfoot Ragan said to her husband:

"There must be some way of getting him down."

"You mean it," said Chubfoot briefly. "He's 30-foot up."

"Well, you shouldn't of bet him in the first place," and his wife, which was something Chubfoot already knew

PERSONNEL
MANAGER



"Miss Fingler: I think you'll be perfect for the position I have in mind for you."

"Ah — shut up, will you," he said, looking away, and the three back.

"Instead of talking like that to me how about getting up there and getting that horse down for a change —"

"You got any hooks?" Clubfoot demanded. "Then shut up if you haven't." He went outside and poked back and forth outside the kitchen door in the darkness, his heavy boot bumping monotonously on the dirt path.

In the night there was frost, and when everybody assembled in the morning they saw that Saddlebags had been covered with muck. Also there was a pile of grass in front of him and an empty steaming bowl which could have held water. Gallipoh Smith was still up there by the strainer post and his hair was damp and wet.

At nine in the morning one of the men climbed up to Gallipoh and said:

"You go off and get some sleep. I'll keep an eye on him for you."

The sweat had gone from Gallipoh's face but he staggered when he walked off. As he passed the group he stopped and looked back, and the sweat broke out again on his face, for from where he now stood the thing looked worse. His half-caste face was as yellow as a Christmas tree as though the sweating had drained his hard tan from the skin. Then he turned and walked slowly towards the houses.

"A good bloke," someone said and the others nodded, and the women, who knew that Gallipoh's wife had left him because of the sourness in him, made sounds of agreement and sorrow.

With Gallipoh gone the men's minds walked forward like troops getting from one bad position to another. Bill Mandlin said softly:

"We got to get him down all right, but don't touch me how."

That was as far as everybody got already, and it was not very far at all.

"In the city we could hire a crane with a long boom, but here—" Bill looked about him at the scrub and the river and the raised roofs of the houses. "Here," he went on, "we haven't got even a phone on. The longest stick of timber I've seen round here is about eight feet and we've got no rope or wire."

A man with a big Adam's apple cleared his throat. He was the finest hunter in the group and a rifle fitted naturally into hand as a spade or a spear fitted the hands of other men.

"Someone better tell Gallipoh

we'd better shoot him," he said with conviction. "He can't stay up there for ever, that's for sure."

In the middle of the morning three small boys crossed over on some big stones downstream of the group and sneaked off into the scrub carrying sticks. A minute later a chorus of shouts rose from the south end of the bridge. Three smoke spears arched up towards the bridge and dropped back into the river. One of the men burned along the bank waving his arms, and the boys ran

The man who had stayed up by the bridge while Gallipoh slept said to the men:

"I warned him about going out on the bridge. Those were six lighters and a drum."

"The horse—" someone asked, "—is he taking the gear?"

"Only the water," the man replied, "heavy now and then he starts shaking. You can feel it along the wire."

"Like I said," the man with the big Adam's apple put in, "We ought



"Here's a beauty . . . only 16 mg. tar, 12 mg. nicotine!"

off deeper into the scrub. The man came back, his face creased with indignation.

"Trying to spear him," he said with a snarl, then added, "Kids!"

No-one woke Gallipoh, who slept on until it was night, and no-one heard him leave his house in the darkness.

But in the morning when the group re-formed he was back by the strainer post and still staring along the bridge.

to tell Gallipoh we should shoot him." He looked round on the others and said persuasively, "We'd be doing him a favor."

It was noon when Gallipoh pushed himself away from the strainer and walked down to the group, and when he got close they all saw that he looked older and shrunken and pathetic. His eyes searched the faces until they found Clubfoot's, and Gallipoh and slowly:

(Continued on page 64.)

SARAH AND SALLY





LOBO TRAP

The Ebony Gang and their leader were too fast for the law to catch. But if they could be tempted out into the open . . .
FICTION / WALLACE MCKINLEY

CONCHO, lastly desert mining town, dotted in the fierce heat of a late afternoon sun. Quiet reigned except for the unceasing clatter of the stamps from the mills clustered at the foot of Eagle Mountain. The dusty street was almost deserted. The town would not come to life until the day shift came out of the shafts driven deep into the heart of the mountain.

Luke Morry appeared in the doorway of the adobe stage office. He was as lean as a weathervane, battered black hat brushed the top of the door frame. The expression on his long, thin face was solemn, almost doleful as he squinted across the wilderness of sage-dotted mesa. Slowly he raised one hand, rubbed his forehead thoughtfully.

Out in the distance where the road dipped down into Cottonwood Canyon, a dust cloud marked the course of the approaching stage. Luke's eyes narrowed and his lounging form straightened. The dust was trailing out rapidly. Tom Riley was pushing his horses hard. Which was strange. Unusual—

Luke Morry turned his head. A man crouched around the corner of the building. The man showing under the brim of his hat was a flaming red. Twinkling blue eyes held a gleam of recklessness. Old friends, these two. Luke Morry, philosopher and stage driver, Clint Doyle, outside puncher, now guard for the stages running between Concho and Silver City.

"Your conscience bothers" you, Luke? Or is it business?"

"Neither one, money. Stage watcher" Tom Riley rolling up the dust. The horse's got him, or the devil is trading close on his heels."

Doyle's face hardened as he studied the lengthening dust banner. "A bunch o' devils, more likely. Callin' themselves the Ebony Gang. If they got old Tom . . ."

He did not finish. In grim glance the two watched the approach of the fast-moving stage.

Behind four brown and leathery horses the stage swept into Concho. Morry was beside the heavy coach before it stopped. The driver swung on the seat. Beneath a coating of dust, his features showed drawn and bloodless. He tried to speak, and a crimson froth dyed his lips. He crumpled suddenly, like a paper figure caught by the wind. Luke caught him as he pitched forward.

A crowd was gathering as they carried Tom Riley into the stage office. The warmer of excited talk carried into the quiet of the room. Straightening his long frame, Luke looked across the limp form of the old driver into the eyes of his friend.

"Hit three times. Wonder he lived long enough to get the stage in."

A soft oath came from Doyle's lips. "The sucker's innocent! It's going to be mighty hard on Tom's name and the kids."

Morry's face was expressionless, but little pinpoints of light glittered in his eyes. It was a chaotic future



that Tom Riley's widow faced. For her husband, the most of his land, had lived with no thought of the morrow.

Morry turned his head as Concho's sheriff, Bert Wheeler, entered the room. A moment or two Wheeler looked down into the set features of the dead driver. Then he lifted his head, asked a question.

"Tom's right went out. Tom he could say anything," Luke answered.

Wheeler's heavy shoulders sagged, there were lines on his face that made him look old, tired. "Another job we can charge up to the Ebony Gang, I reckon."

"Seems that way," Morry nodded. "Only this time, Sheriff, the stage wasn't carrying any treasure."

The two men regarded each other steadily. "Mornin' it was Riley they was after?"

"Just that. It was Tom who kept them from lifting the strong box two weeks ago. They wait after Tom's scalp to serve notice on the rest of us—that's my guess."



Wheeler's lips tightened. Then, with a shuffle of booted feet, two men entered the little office. Both were miners. They had, it appeared, been the only passengers in Tom Riley's coach, and their story confirmed Luke Morrey's theory. The stage had been pulling up the heavy grade when the gang announced their presence by a burst of gunfire from the brush. No attempt had been made to stop the stage. The passengers had had a brief glimpse of three masked men, that was all.

Wheeler palled at his drooping mustache, spoke hoarsely. "Two Riley they was after, a'right."

"Yeah," Clem Doyle put in. His head was thrust forward, blue eyes snapping coldly. "Question is, Bart, what you are to do about it?"

"Everything I know how," the Sheriff replied, but there was a baffled, despairing look in the back of his eyes. "It ain't easy. Some clever head a'runnin' this gang. They know when to hit and where. Most folks are afraid even to talk

about 'em. And with all the hard cases hangin' out in the Alkali, an army could go in there and come back with nothing much to show — 'cept bullet holes, maybe."

"Well, by Godfrey, something's got to be done!" Doyle snapped. "And if the Sheriff's office ain't do it—"

"Hold on, redhead!" Morrey laid a restraining hand on his friend's arm. "Bart is right. We'd all like a crack at this outfit, but we've got to find 'em. First law fighting won't help and there's no use to the fence."

"Went you thinkin' of some side-burnin'?" There was a hint of mockery in the voice. Luke Morrey turned slowly to face the speaker. His eyes narrowed as he met the challenging stare of the slender, carefully groomed figure in the doorway.

Mill Wear was the owner of the Nagsel, Coycho's largest palace of chance. He was a well-known figure in the mining town and somewhat of a mystery, as well. Wear's past was a

closed book. There was something in the murky black eyes, in the set of his thin lips that discouraged in-
quaintness.

"Not me. I've got a job and it ain't hunting any Ebony Gang." Morrey's lips twitched in a grim smile. "Cuddeggan's land never was a hobby o' mine."

"A cautious soul." There was thinly veiled contempt in Wear's voice. "But your redheaded friend — maybe he'd like to keep these holdups?"

Doyle granted. "Way things have been going, it's a sight safer to stick up stages and more profitable. But I don't reckon it's necessary to tell you that, Wear."

Wicked lights glared in the murky eyes. But the gambler's face was expressionless, his voice was smooth, quiet but with a fine note of menace. "Nobody ever got lockjaw keepin' his mouth shut. I'd think that over, Doyle."

The crowd in front of the stage office had dispersed, twilight settled

over the weakening morning town. At the corner, Luke Morry's eyes made a glowing spot of color in the dust. Clem Doyle stared, spoke meditatively. "There's a ten thousand reward out for this Ebony gang. Maybe you was kind of hairy, tellin' 'em you didn't aim to go back hunting."

Morry's voice was a soft drawl. "Not any. Folks who turn collars' rewards is likely to collect lead first

time, but if they did, it would be with dandy swiftness.

The road made a wide loop where a narrow side canyon broke through the black lava walls. The rats wound down from the gloomy entrance, the old road leading to a long since deserted mining camp. The dry brush stirred as a puff of hot wind came up the canyon. There was no other sign of life. But broke blocks shivered

The passenger gasped, his eyes widened as he regarded the shivering Colt that had appeared in the tall driver's hand. He did not want to argue the point, but fairly tumbled out of the stage.

Morry relieved him of his gun. Glancing up, he saw Doyle glowering at him. "Boddy is done" for a spell. Now, he ain't hurt. I tapped him real easy-like. Hey, you! Grab that and use him down."

The passenger obeyed. Already the guard was beginning to groan and stir. Morry waited no time. Hoisting himself back into the seat, he released the brake. The horses leaped into their collars as the long whip popped over their backs. The coach lurched sharply into the rats of the old road, disappeared in a swirling dust cloud.

The smell of dawn was in the air, its gray skintouch had advanced along the eastern horizon. Under the desert stars, the mineral-coated surface of Deadwater Sink glimmered faintly. Outlined against the white background were two nudes, Luke Morry and Clem Doyle. They rode in silence, slouched comfortably in the saddles but alert for the first sign of danger.

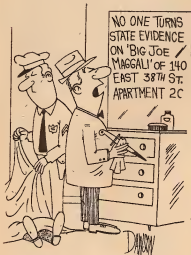
It was certain that the Sheriff and a posse were on their trail. But the danger of capture by the law was not a pressing one. For ahead, looming darkly against the sky, was the granite bulk of the Alkali Range.

Before long the partners would be climbing the gravel fan spread out from the mouth of Deadwater Canyon. And at the end of that deep, narrow gash in the living rock was Sky High. A tough camp, sanctuary for some of the worst rascals in a dozen States. In Sky High was only one law, that of Judge Colt.

Morry was driving the shadows from the ark when the horses climbed the last ascent of the fan. Huge masses of rock littered the canyon's mouth. From the dark depths came a whispering breath of wind.

To Morry, it was like a warning of danger. No sound broke the brooding hush, but his muscles tightened. For an instant, his fingers brushed the butt of the Colt in its shoulder holster. No matter what peril lurked in the canyon, they could not turn back. Safety, if such it could be called, lay with the lawless inhabitants of the camp in its natural stronghold high in the mountains.

There was a creak of leather as Doyle leaned closer to his partner. His eyes glowered in the shadow of his hat brim. "Don't put like the feel



"Only one clue to go on. Well, at least it's something."

Now I've got an idea that beats that all hollow. Listen, railroad."

The stage was on heat out and traveling rapidly down the winding descent of Cottonwood Gulch. In the driver's seat, Luke Morry swayed easily to the motion of the coach, his eyes fixed on the road ahead. Behind him, the two guards maintained a sharp vigil. Experience had shown that the Ebony Gang had ways of finding out when billion shipments went out from the Concho mines. The bandits might not strike this

load as Morry pulled the trotting horses to a halt.

The metallic clink of a shotgun hammer going back was followed by the thud of a blow and a stifled groan. Without looking around, Luke swung lightly to the ground.

The lone passenger put his head out of the window, apprehension plain on his features. "What - What's your' call had a holdup?"

"You might call it that," Luke Morry admitted. "Chub cut, fellas, and don't get festive. Might bring on a sudden attack of heart failure."

of things, Luke, I smell trouble."

"Which is something we can expect to find most anywhere," Morry replied with grim brevity. "We know what's behind. We've got to take a chance on what lies ahead."

The horses had caught the essence of their idiom. They moved forward slowly, following the trail that wound among the rocky masses. The clink of the shoe boots woke little echoes. Luke's eyes shifted constantly over the stark desolation of the canyon's mouth. As they advanced, the tension increased rather than lessened.

Luke's horse gave the first alarm. A quarter run through the animal's muscles and he lifted his head, sensitive ears pointed forward. His rider's gaze flinched to the shattered granite ledge, scanning the canyon wall just above them. A movement like the shifting of a shadow, caught his eyes.

The horse reared at Luke, wrenching at the bit, shouldering Doyle's gray. The swirl of a rifle appeared the instant Luke went out of the saddle in a dive. As he struck the ground, he whirled with the speed of a great cat. Answering the whiplike report of the rifle was a ripping crash of four shots, so



"The only word I understand means 'unsolved'?"

closely spaced they blended into one blast of firing.

From behind the ledge a man suddenly stood erect. He clawed at his chest, while the rifle he had earned slid clattering down the rock.

Slowly he turned on his heel to tell Morry.

"Got him!" Clem Doyle grunted strongly.

Morry slipped fresh cartridges into the long-barreled Colt. His expression was wooden, but his eyes held the cold glitter of a rearing eagle's. "Keep a sharp look-out. Snakes are likely to run in pairs."

Like a shadow, he did it among the rocks. Taking advantage of every bit of cover, he worked his way up to the ledge. Not until he was sure that the hidden marksman had been alone did he step out into the open.

Kneeling swiftly beside the sprawled figure, his lips curled in a ruthless smile. "Thought so?" he said under his breath. A moment longer he looked at the set features of the dead man. Then swiftly, expertly he searched him.

When Luke Morry rejoined his companion, Doyle questioned him with a look. "Our fast-shooter's friend wasn't exactly a stranger. Was a going to run his pet poodle."

"So it was Duke Quinn?" Clem Doyle exclaimed. "By Godfrey, Luke, you reckon that mean War is tied into this thing?"

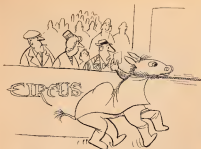
"I have got a notion that way," Morry selected gently. "Quinn was out of town considerable, looks' over running prospects for West, he claimed. But I'm wondering if he needed this in the running game."

He held out something black and shapeless. Doyle leaned forward to peep at it. An oath broke from his lips.

"The Ebony Gamp? And War and



"I hope you remembered to pick up an instruction book."



"It says 'Help! We're being held prisoners against our will!'"

Quinn as thick as thieves. No wonder the gang knewed where and when to hit their hole with War poison' them three orders. You figure Quinn was layin' for us?"

Luke shook his head. "Nope. Recollect, Quinn wasn't in town when we pulled out with the traps. My idea is he was at Sky High and leading back for town when he seen us coming. Could be he figured we were on the trail of Tom Riley's folks."

"Anyhow, he decided to put us out of the way."

"Believe you've hit it. And that means the gang's hideout is in Sky High. Chances are, we'll run into the whole bunch there."

"Can happen," Luke shrugged. "If War ain't in camp, I'll gamble he's burning the wind in that direction. We'll find the answer after we pull into Sky High."

At the summit of Dungen Canyon the partners drove over Clear Dory's twisted in the saddle, spurring back into the depths of that mighty gash in the living rock. His lips puckered in a soundless whistle.

"Men couldn't ask a better hide-out. No sheriff's going to sneak up on him — not up that canyon."

"You're not the first fella to figure that out," Mooney replied dryly. "I have heard that most of the boys up this way are plumb Sheriff-sky."

"We ought to be right in style."

"I'm wonderin' about that. If news of the disappearance of the stage — and the strongbox — hasn't drifted up this way, War will know about it. After all, it's a racket up

here. Thirty thousand in gold bullion. That's the way the gang will look at it. And it won't take 'em long to figure we caught it along our backtrail."

— His expression was gloomy. "Looks like a man can't find peace and quiet nowhere. Might as well take a job sheriffin' and get paid for hunter's trouble."

Clear snorted. "Can't expect any thing different. Not with you built like a lightning rod. You draw trouble same as it dots thunder-bolts."

The partners entered Sky High valley at its lower end. A long, narrow trough between soaring cliffs, with the road snaking down its center to the huddle of buildings, they rode into the camp. Luke's eyes were sharp under drooping lids. Sky High had a reputation even among the tough towns of the Nevada and California deserts. It was a magnet that attracted desperate men with an aching desire to find a refuge from the law.

Both curious and hostile glances were levelled at them as they rode down the rutted road. Sky High's citizens were hard-boiled, out-gunned for the most part. But if Luke Mooney read any menace in their sideward regard, he gave no sign. Only mild interest showed on his long face.

The partners rode up to the Ace Corral, just beyond the Head Rock Hotel. As they dismounted from their weary ponies, a man came out of the stable. He was small and scrawny, but grating as colorful as his person. After unsmiling and depositing their gear in the stable, Mooney addressed a casual question to the Indian proprietor. "Did War leave any word for us?"



"You, of all people. Desmond — a marriage counsellor."

The watery blue eyes blinked rapidly, almost showed on the man's face. "Naps? I darno nothin' about it. He didn't say nothin', anywhere." And with that he turned and shuffled hastily into the stable.

"And what was the idea again that fool question?" Clem demanded when they were out of earshot.

"Wanted to know how well War was known here," Luke replied placidly. "He must be a regular old ho-well in these dipses, with that rabbit laid back his ears and looked for his barrow."

In spite of Morrey's prediction that War would make good haste for Sky High, the day passed without incident. When dusk rolled quietly down from the star peaks that glowered above the little valley, the gambler had not shown himself.

From a position in front of the Hard Rock Hotel, the partners watched lights appear along the darkening street. No one seemed to be paying them any particular attention. Sky High was absorbed in minding his own business. But Luke knew they were being watched. Trouble was headed their way at a high lops with the bit in its teeth.

Clem's cigar made a glowing arc as he flicked it out into the street. He spoke briefly. "What are these fellows waitin' for? Trouble, huh? I seen more excitement at a Sunday school picnic."

"Keep your shirt on," Luke advised quietly. "That scared-gut at the supper table, now. Maybe you noticed him eyein' us like a hungry wolf? Right at present, they's two more fellows across the street keepin' cases on us. Things are shapin' up for a hot time."

Even as he spoke, his sharp gaze caught a movement at the farther end of the hotel porch. Instantly he felt the quick, savage split of spirits that the presence of danger always brought him. He felt something touch his sleeve, glanced down and met his partner's eyes. Nodding, he spoke hoarsely. "Time for us to be onfire, I reckon."

The two moved forward without any appearance of haste. From behind the corner of the building, a figure stepped out directly in their path. "Just a minute, Morrey. I've been looking for you."

"That so?" Luke cocked him. He recognized War minutely, and at the same time was aware of the two men who had materialized from the shadows behind them. Another pair were crossing the street. The show-down was coming quicker than he had expected.

War took a step forward, bumping the two face to face of close rings. "Didn't expect to see me here, did you, Morrey?"

"I ain't exactly overcome with surprise," Luke Morrey declared. "Anything special on your mind?"

"Well, there is I was wondering if you heard about the stage being robbed. It seems the thieves got away with some \$10,000 in gold."

"But Wheeler was real put out about it."

War's voice had sharpened, earned an undertone of menace. "The two of you played a clever game, but you've watched the end of your string. I want the bullion."

Luke Morrey felt his palms glisten. War's men were closing in.

There was still time, if he acted quickly. He opened his mouth. Clem Doyle's hot retort cut him off short.

"You and your Ebony Gang'll be in hell a long time 'fore you get anything out of me!"



"Say, Frank and Evelyn seem to have really hit it off!"

"Seems I did hear something about it," Morrey drawled easily. "You on the trail of the holdups, Mike?"

"In a way, yes. Oh, not for the reward. I wanted to suggest that these - gentlemen - let me handle the bullion for them. For safe keeping, of course. So much gold might go to their heads."

"Sounds reasonable," Morrey rubbed his long chin reflectively. "Only these fellows - when you find them - might have other ideas."

"Never mind the play-acting!"

"Feel like that about it, do you?" War asked. His voice a gentle purr.

His hand slid down to his side.

"Don't you?" Luke Morrey said easily. He jammed the barrel of the Colt into War's belly. "Get your hand away from that gun. That's better. And I wouldn't try calling to your friends. Before they can get me, you'll be as dead as Ben Adams' old mule."

He heard the sharp hiss of War's unseen breath. In spite of his own control, the gambler's voice trebled.

(Continued on page 63)

MONDAY



MONA LISA



THE LOCKED ROOMS



It all seemed so simple. Except the accused had not been tried, convicted, or any possible appeal resolved.

FICTION/Peter Sinclair

DETECTIVE SERGEANT Donald Burke tossed a bundle of papers bound neatly with a red tape onto the dining room table and sank into his favorite armchair.

"Today I arrested my first murderers," he announced.

His wife, Rene, called from the kitchen where she was turning lunch

steaks under the grill. "That's nice, dear."

His father-in-law Edgar Hodgkins, seated on the sofa opposite, grunted and turned a page of the newspaper, unimpressed.

Rene, who missed no opportunity to foster good relations between her husband and her father, called. "Did you hear that, Dad? Donald caught his first murderer today. Don't you think that's wonderful?"

Hodgkins replied without lowering the paper. "I'd think it's wonderful when the man has been tried fairly, convicted and any appeal has been heard and resolved."

"There's no doubt about this fellow," said Donald.

"Is it in connection with the murder this morning of a young woman in a motel room?" Hodgkins asked.

"That's the one. Is it in the papers already?"

"On page three of the Mirror."

"What does it say, Dad?" and Rene. "Read it out."

"They've probably got it all wrong," Donald growled.

Hodgkins said "MOTEL MURDER STUDENT HELD. Police this morning charged a 25-year-old medical student with the murder of a woman at an inner-city motel. The student will appear before Central Court of Petty Sessions later today. Police were called to the motel about nine o'clock after an employee found the body. It is believed that the man was still asleep beside the body when the discovery was made. It is understood a judge of the New South Wales Supreme Court slept the night in a suite next to the murder room."

Donald grunted. "It's right as far as it goes. But, of course, they don't know a quarter of it."

"Has he confessed?" Hodgkins asked.

"Not yet. But he will."

"Or you'll bang out the rubber horse, eh?"

"Don't be silly. It's old posts like you that . . ."

"Now, now, you two. No fighting before dinner," said Rene. "To me Dad was only joking, wasn't you, Dad?"

"Yes," said Hodgkins, "but the reaction was interesting. Why are you so sure he'll confess?"

"Because no one else but him could possibly have done it."

"And why is that?"

"Because when the maid, who took up their breakfast trays, entered the room the door was still chained on the inside and he was asleep beside the body," Donald explained.

"Then how did the maid get in?"

"Through a connecting door between the murder room and the judge's room next door."

"Is it usual for staff to force entry into the bedroom of paying guests?" Hodgkins asked.

"In that case it was reasonable enough. The previous night the man had put in their breakfast order for eight o'clock. When the maid took breakfast up to their room at eight they didn't answer her knock so she took the trays away and came back half an hour later. When they still didn't answer she used her pass-key to open the door. But the safety chain on the inside of the door was in place and she couldn't open it more than a few inches . . . just far enough to see the bathroom door, which was closed. All the bathroom doors are fitted with these vacuum, self-closing devices."

"Real spy for detail," Hodgkins commented.

Donald continued. "The maid called to them several times then decided they must have flown the coop during the night — that's not uncommon with young couples who book in for a night's fun."

"You think it was like that, eh?"

"Well, she was married, but not to him. The maid knew them by sight. Apparently they'd been going there together off and on for months. Anyway, she fetched the key for the connecting door and went in through the judge's room. When she went into the couple's room it was so dark that . . ."

"Wait a moment," said Hodgkins.

"That must have been about a quarter to nine. It's broad daylight."

"That's true but the window was covered with those heavy curtains they usually use in motels. Anyway, as soon as she entered the room the maid saw that the two of them were still in bed. The man was lying on his back on the side of the bed nearest the window, snoring loudly. And the girl was on her side with both arms over the edge of the bed. She tapped the girl on the bare shoulder, noticed she was very cold, then shook her. The girl rolled over, half out of bed. There was a knife sticking out of her back and blood all over the sheets. Of course, the maid screamed her head off and woke up the man. He was very groggy and it took him a few minutes to realize where he was. One of our doctors examined him later in the morning, and it seems he'd taken a quantity of barbiturates some time the previous night. Anyway, when the maid noticed he was on a spot he made a great pretence of surprise and horror. But



he didn't find anyone. The maid rang the switchboard from the room and the switch rang us. I was there shortly after nine o'clock and the man — name of Dillon — was still wandering around, apparently in a lot of a daze."

"Did he have much to drink the night before?" Hodgkins asked.

"Not a great deal," Donald replied. "He drank two small bottles

The girl became so upset that in the middle of dessert she threw down her spoon and fork, pulled on her coat and walked out of the restaurant into the street. Dillon followed her out and they continued the argument on the footpath. Eventually she calmed down and agreed to return with him but instead of returning to the dining room they went straight up to their suite, which he'd booked by phone

room?"

"No."

"And did the waiter himself prepare the drinks or was there a barman on duty?"

"There's always a barman on duty until 10 o'clock," Donald said.

"Do any of the motel staff live on the premises?"

"Yes. There are rooms for staff on the second floor. The waiter and barman live there and so do several of the receptionists."

"On which floor was the room where the body was found?"

"The fourth," Donald replied. "By the way, the whole building is air-conditioned. None of the windows are open and none had been broken or tampered with."

Eggs put dinner on the table and they sat down and began eating.

"Do you know what time Dillon and the girl went to bed?" Hodgkins asked.

Donald replied between mouthfuls. "Yes, we do. There was a fellow — not a very pleasant type — staying in another wing of the motel who said he saw them get into bed about nine forty-five and their light go out at 10."

"What do you know about the judge? What time did he go to bed ... or haven't you picked up enough to question him?"

"Nothing of the sort. I called on him at his chambers and he was happy to co-operate. He stays at the motel frequently and always asks for the same room. Old fellow. But not on his days. He had dinner in the restaurant last night and went to his room at nine forty-five — same time as the other two were going to bed. He's positive that he never left the room and didn't hear anything unusual from Dillon's room."

"Where was the judge when the maid went through his room to open the connecting door to Dillon's room?" Hodgkins asked.

"He was asleep when she knocked. He had to get up to release the safety chain on his door to let her in."

"Then the judge must have been one of the first people at the scene of the murder. Did he form any opinion about Dillon's reactions and behavior?"

"I didn't press him for an opinion on that. He seemed to want to keep right out of that aspect of the matter ... quite proper, too — a man in his position."

They finished eating and Eggs took away the plates.

"I suppose you searched Dillon's room thoroughly?" Hodgkins asked.



"Marriage. Sidney, is an idea where there has come."

of beer in the room before going to bed and a large bottle earlier in the evening during dinner with the girl in the motel's restaurant on the ground floor."

"And what about motive?"

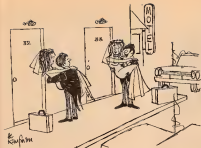
"While they were having dinner in the restaurant the waiter — who, incidentally, doubled as drunk water later in the evening and took the drinks up to their room — overheard snatches of conversation whenever he came near the table. He said they were having one hell of an argument,

the day before. About eight o'clock Dillon rang room service for a small bottle of beer and a glass of gin and tonic and repeated the order about eight forty-five. The same waiter took both orders up to their room — the same fellow who had waited on them in the restaurant."

"Where did he prepare the drinks?" Hodgkins asked.

"All the drinks came from a cocktail bar on the ground floor, near the dining room."

"Is the bar visible from the dining



"Fence shop?"

"We did. I had a plan drawn of it for the inquest and photographs taken."

"Are they in that bundle of papers you brought home tonight?"

"Yes." Donald untied the papers and unfolded a neatly drawn plan.

Hodgkins examined the plan and scratched, more to himself than to Donald. "Both doors were chained from the inside when the maid came at eight thirty . . . and the connecting door was locked."

"That's right," said Donald. "The judge and he checked it before going to bed."

"Were the two small beer bottles, the beer glasses and the two gin and tonic glasses still in Dillon's room this morning?"

"Yes, they were. The maid is positive she didn't touch them or anything else."

"Were there any fingerprints on them?" Hodgkins asked.

"Dillon's fingerprints were on the beer glasses and the girl's were on the small glasses."

"And the bottles?"

Donald hesitated. "Funny about them," he said. "Dillon had wiped them down of fingerprints then rinsed them out with water."

"If there were no fingerprints, how can you say who wiped them or rinsed them out?" Hodgkins asked.

"The girl could have done it."

"I suppose she could have. But why?"

"I have no idea. But why should Dillon have done it?"

"Blame, I don't know. Does it matter?"

"It may."

"Robbush. What does it matter which of them rinsed out the beer

bottles . . . or why? Perhaps they didn't like the smell of stale beer."

"Possibly. When you searched the room did you find anything unusual?"

"Apart from their personal things — and they had few enough of them, sleeping in the beds they were — there were only the bottles and glasses."



"I'm afraid I'm the bearer of bad tidings, Lady Marianne, I've just received word that your husband has been killed in the Crusades."

"Nothing in the wastepaper basket?" Hodgkins asked.

"Nothing. I checked it myself."

"Then where were the bottle tops?"

"Well, how would I know? You ask the effiant questions. The barman probably took them off before he handed the bottles over to the waiter, or maybe the waiter opened them in the room and took the tops away on his tray."

"Hrmm. Those are possibilities," said Hodgkins. He began looking through the bundle of papers on the table, pulled out a photograph and examined it. "This photo of a door with the safety chain in place . . . was it taken inside Dillon's room?"

Donald glanced at the identification on the back of the photo. "Yes, that's the door from Dillon's room to the corridor. The connecting door had no chain, just an old-fashioned lock."

"Hm, pass me the magnifying glass from the pencil drawer, please," said Hodgkins. "Thank you." He began to scrutinize the photograph in detail.

"Good," scoffed Donald. "He thinks he's Sherlock. Bloody Holmes. What's the matter? Don't you believe Dillon did it?"

"I'm not convinced of it," said



"Yes, I don't know, Charlie. If I say 'no' you'll think I'm easy ... on the other hand, if I say 'no' I'll lose a night's pay!"

Hodgkins, without pausing in his examination.

"Well, if he didn't, then who did? Tell me that. Look, he had an argument with her, murdered her then tried to kill himself with an overdose of sleeping pills."

"You may be right but I doubt it." Hodgkins passed to Donald the photograph he had been examining. "What made those marks on the carpet directly below the door handle?"

Donald took the magnifying glass and examined the print. "Yes, I noticed them. It looked like some slab had dropped five cigarette ash... burned right through the carpet."

Hodgkins handed another photograph to Donald. "This photo, also taken inside Dillon's room, shows a clock built into the head of the bed. Was it an alarm clock?"

"Yes," Donald replied, "and the alarm was set for 10 o'clock. I know that, because I was there when it went off."

"Doesn't you think it strange that Dillon should have ordered breakfast for eight o'clock but set the alarm for 10?"

"Dillon said he thought he'd set it for seven o'clock but admitted he'd been feeling unusually drowsy when he went to bed and could easily have made a mistake and set the alarm for the wrong time. I wouldn't attach too much importance to it."

"No, I don't suppose you would." "What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that you choose to attach importance only to those facts which fit into your prematurely conceived theories. If I was you I'd ring police headquarters immediately and have

start any action against Dillon before it's too late and you make a complete ass of yourself."

Donald was dumfounded. "You must have flipped your lid."

"Now Donald," said Kane, who was now busily washing up. "Don't speak to Dad like that."

"I'll be very happy to apologise if

he can explain how anybody other than Dillon could have entered that room after 10 o'clock - don't forget they were seen in bed by the peeping-tom at that time - murdered the girl and left the room, leaving in mind that the door was chained from the inside when the maid arrived with breakfast next morning. And you can't get one of those safety chains in place from outside the room. So, you old maniacs, if Dillon didn't do it, then who did? And if you reckon the judge had anything to do with it..."

"Don't be absurd," Hodgkins snapped. "Those burn marks on the floor... they're the clue. That's how he did it."

"How did he do what? What are you talking about? What about the burn marks?"

Hodgkins ignored the question. "Did you search the staff quarters on the second floor?"

"No. But none of the staff had anything to do with it."

"You're wrong, Donald... they did. You must search the staff rooms immediately, with particular attention to the barman's room."

"But the barman was nowhere near Dillon's room."



"You wouldn't thank me for finding you not guilty, Miss Jones. After all, what are friends for?"

"Don't be stupid, Donald," Hodgkins barked impatiently. "Did you personally have him under observation all of last night? Of course 'you' didn't. You know nothing of his movements after he came off duty at 10 o'clock."

"But why the barnum?" Donald asked plaintively. "If one of the staff killed her — and I don't for some minutes before they did — it's most likely to be the waiter, because he took the drinks to their room."

"Yes, and that's precisely why it wouldn't be him," said Hodgkins. "If the girl had known the waiter and was afraid of him, surely she would have mentioned it to Dillon and he would have lost no time telling you about it to remove suspicion from himself. I take it he hasn't told you that the girl knew the waiter."

"No, he hasn't."

"But the barman may have known either of them and he could have kept track of them without either knowing he was there. What do you know about the barman? Is he married? Does he have any family? How long has he worked at the motel?"

"I haven't interviewed him yet."

"Well, Donald, I'm not trying to tell you how to do your job but if I was you, I'd have a chat to the barman and search his room immediately. You could be lucky and find the evidence you need — particularly if he feels himself to be in the clear."

Donald rose with a sigh. "Well, Dad, I'm sure you're on the wrong track completely this time but I'll do as you suggest. Wait up for me. I shouldn't be late."

Donald returned at the grand-mother clock in the hall struck midnight.

Hodgkins, who was watching television in the lounge, turned off the set when Donald came in. "That didn't take too long," he said. "Find anything interesting?"

"I found something — but I'm damned if I know what to make of it," Donald said. He took a handkerchief from his pocket and unfolded it on the tabletop beside it was a short chain attached to a small metal plate pierced by two holes. The chain had been broken about two inches from the plate.

Hodgkins' eyes glared as he examined the chain. "You found this in the barman's room?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Do you know how long he's been working at the motel?"

"Only a few weeks," said Donald.

"And a he married?"

"Yes, but separated from his wife."

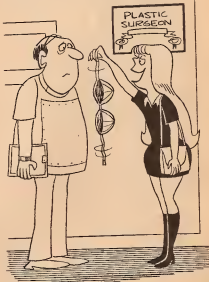
Hodgkins stepped a hand down on the arm of the sofa. "Well, that clinches it. I suppose you've identified the dead girl as his wife."

"Yes, we have. But what does that prove? There's not a scrap of evidence against him."

"No evidence! That's all the evidence you need," said Hodgkins.

harmful — answered the door, I've never seen anyone look so embarrassed. The manager told him to let me search the room and I soon found out why he was embarrassed. All he had on was his dressing gown and one of the little blonde receptionists' chicks was tucked up in his hand."

"That is particularly important," said Hodgkins. "Good work, Donald."



"Well 'er up! I!"

jabbing a finger at the broken safety chain fitting.

"That doesn't prove anything... although he acted guilty as sin when I found it. That's why I took it with me. He'd hidden it at the back of his sock drawer."

"Was he in his room when you went back to the motel just now?"

"Yes, and he wasn't alone," said Donald. "The manager showed me to his room. When Krumm — that's the

"I gave the room a good going over and finally came up with that piece of chain. Just the same, I don't see what we can prove with a bit of broken chain."

"But don't you see, once you rule Dillon out as the murderer..."

"Who's ruled Dillon out? I still think he did it."

"Really, Donald, have you ever heard of a murderer dropping off to

(Continued on page 61.)

MEANEST G.I. IN THE US ARMY

Continued from page 32

stealing their clean socks. He would show his accusers to the ground and punish them until he received an apology.

After basic training, Pnarski's company was sent to San Antonio, Texas, for advanced infantry training. The first weekend there, on his very first pass since he had been in the army, Pnarski all but wrecked a sleazy place called the Hot Cat Club because the owner had accused him of leaning over the bar and stealing a bottle of whiskey. Pnarski wasn't brought up on formal charges but the owner of the Hot Cat Club seemed to have some influence because Wayne was restricted to camp for the remainder of his stay in San Antonio.

But the stay was comparatively brief, a little more than two months. When they finished the training course, Pnarski's company was attached to the Seventh Infantry Division and sent to Camp Polk for maneuvers. Because they took place in the woods and swamps of Louisiana, all of the men in the

company figured they were being trained for the Pacific theatre. However, after two weeks of maneuvers, without any advance warning, the division was marched to the edge of the swamp and loaded aboard waiting trains. They were taken from Louisiana to Norfolk, Virginia, where they boarded a transport and 10 days later, on May 12, 1944, they debarked in Southhampton, England.

The Seventh Infantry Division was stationed in a makeshift camp near the city of Colchester, north of London. There wasn't enough room for training so most of the days were spent listening to lectures about why they were fighting the Germans, how to recognize German tanks, motor vehicles and aircraft by silhouettes, and about venereal diseases.

It rained incessantly from the moment they arrived in England. The only other thing worth noting about the time spent in Colchester was that it was here that Wayne Pnarski made his first friend.

He was an Irishman named Korm McKenney and he owned a bar named The Foxhead. At one time The Foxhead had been declared off limits to all Allied personnel because

30 men had become deathly sick after drinking Mr McKenney's booze. The guess was that he was making his own and wasn't too careful what he put into it. But Pnarski never got sick from drinking The Foxhead's whiskey. He spent all his free time there, often making out of camp during the afternoon to do so. In the evening, when The Foxhead became crowded, Pnarski would put on an apron and work behind the bar, a clear violation of US Army regulations, as he was in uniform. However, the friendship lasted only for about a month because McKenney not only accused Pnarski of stealing money from him but stealing his girl, framed as well. He hired a lawyer and tried to sue the United States Army for bringing Pnarski to England. The story made all of the British newspapers, but, of course, it never came to trial.

There must have been some truth to Rolf McKenney's claim, though, because not only did Pnarski continue to see the girl, but a warrant officer attached to the camp's commissary accused him of stealing whole sides of beef from the refrigerators and dropping them off at her apartment. During the war, beef in England was worth more than gold. The Inspector General's office investigated and they did find a whole side of beef on the lady's premises, and did find that beef had been distributed to all of her relatives and friends, and co-workers at the munitions factory that employed her. But there was no proof that Pnarski had supplied it. Not to be on the safe side, he was again restricted to camp for an indefinite period.

But the girl's attraction was too much and Pnarski took to slipping out of camp without authority, using his apartment and returning the same way he left, through the series of single barbed wire fences that surrounded the camp. And it was on one of these nights, about 1:30 in the morning, to be more specific, that he met up with the two sergeants. Pnarski swore they were drunk.

They were in a Jeep and passed him on one of Colchester's dingy back streets. One of the sergeants shouted, "Hey, Pnarski, you're supposed to be restricted to camp. What the hell you doing here?"

The driver brought the Jeep to an abrupt stop and backed it up onto the sidewalk in front of Pnarski. Both of them got out and backed Pnarski against a wall.

"Let's see your pass," said the



"I'm in for bonding, folding and mutilating a computer card!"

older one, a master sergeant.

Pinardi ignored him.

"We could run you in, you know. You know what kind of charge we could hang on you? Unauthorized leave, and right before an inspection. You could easily get 10 years for that."

"Aw, let's not be rough on the man, Serge," the other one said. "You know, he's in love."

Pinardi had not said one word.

"Let's show a little mercy," the second one said. "Like the good book says. How much money you got on you, Pinardi?"

Pinardi acted quickly. His kick caught the master sergeant's empty stomach and his first punch landed in the other's face. Both groined and cursed but Pinardi was like a wild man. He was smart and he was mean, no blow was too low, and in a very short time both sergeants were wailing, one holding on to the brick wall for support, the other crawling around on all fours as if looking for something. Pinardi had just finished several months of tough infantry training and both sergeants, who were attached to the headquarters company, couldn't take three steps without losing their breath. It was no contest.

How long he continued beating them Pinardi didn't remember. He flattened the one on all fours, the master sergeant, with a vicious kick to the ribs opposite his heart. He dropped the other, who was holding onto the wall, with a fistful of punches directly to his kidneys. And even after both men were down and still, Pinardi continued to beat them, stomping their groins, kicking their heads, beating them on their backs. The cobblestone roadway was glistening and slippery with blood.

Pinardi stopped so suddenly as he had begun. It seemed to have dawned on him that it was over, that there wasn't a chance of their getting up a fight. Immediately his mind began working. He dropped down and felt their temples and wrists for pulses. As far as he could tell, there were no pulses. Which meant that he had probably killed them. He had to get out of there.

Acting almost automatically, Pinardi slipped off the master sergeant's jacket because it had the least blood on it. There were papers in the pockets, identification, a couple of letters from the sergeant's wife, and a permanent pass which was issued to all men above a certain rank who were attached to Headquarters Company. The pass was good anywhere and had no



"Don't take my word for it . . . ask Tuffy."

restrictions. The last thing Pinardi did was to take what money there was in the sergeant's pockets, a little more than \$70 between the two of them. Then fortified, he climbed into the Jeep and highballed it out of Colchester.

A plan formed itself while Pinardi drove. He would go to London and lose himself among the tens of thousands of American soldiers who thronged that city's streets. Even while he thought about it he slipped the dog tags from around his neck and threw them away.

When his Jeep ran low on gas, Pinardi made it to a truck convoy parked on the road, the dogs asleep. He got into a truck, released the brake and allowed it to roll to the bottom of a hill. Then, out of control of the drivers, he started the engine. He made London by dawn.

But London wasn't the sanctuary he had hoped. His very first morning he was stopped five times by MP patrols and his papers examined and checked against lists of deserters. Obviously his name would soon appear on that list, along with the master sergeant's whose papers he carried. No, he had to get out of London.

He left London that afternoon, taking the first train that left the Victoria station. It was headed for a place called Weymouth, where he arrived several hours later. Though Pinardi had no way of knowing it, Weymouth was a Channel port loaded with American troops getting ready for the invasion of Europe.

But he was stopped by MPs at Weymouth, too. Before he left the

station he was asked for identification and his pass, both of which were checked against the same master list they were using in London. One MP explained that because of the invasion the number of desertions had risen and orders had come down to drag every last son of a bitch back by the ears. It was obvious that all of England was on the alert for him, or would be within the next 24 hours. Only they weren't going to drag him around by the ears, they were going to stand him at front of a firing squad.

Within several hours of his arrival at Weymouth, Pinardi slipped into a US Army Replacement Depot where men newly arrived from the States were assigned to fill vacancies in existing units. Wandering around the depot, ready to take advantage of any situation that presented itself, Pinardi was down, as if by some magnet, to a shower room. It was huge and almost empty. There were two uniforms in the dressing area and he chose the one that had papers in it.

The papers belonged to a PFC Wilbur Egan, an infantryman who had got sick while taking advanced training and needed shipping out with his regular outfit. He dumped the master sergeant's jacket into a lost-and-found bag, took up the papers and left them in a waste basket, then reported to the assignment officer. It was all very simple. The assignment officer, a major, scratched the name of Wilbur Egan from one sheet of paper and slipped it on another. Which is how Pinardi came to be attached to the

(Continued on page 58)



WACKY WORLD



"I'll have whatever he's having."

When wackier worlds are built, ADAM'S cartoonists will build them. For you unbelievers take this wacky world of Slim, for example. Read 'em and weep. We mean chuckle . . .



"I forgot, doctor — is it pills or gallons?"

OF SLIM



"Did you see a low constricator come by here?"



"Why can't we have a swimming pool?"



"Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking . . ."

WEANEST G.I., Continued

79th Infantry Division, whose shoulder patch was the Cross of Lorraine.

There could have been trouble. The real Wilkie Evans no doubt complained about someone stealing his jacket and his papers and they must have tried to trace the man who had used them. But the Normandy invasion was about to get underway.

Finnski and the other men who were about to join the 79th were taken by train to Bournemouth and from there directly to an APA — an attack transport — which was riding at anchor less than a mile offshore. Two days later the invasion of Europe had begun, three days after that, the 79th Infantry Division was landing on the Cherbourg Peninsula.

The Cherbourg landing was no picnic and had Finnski remained in England his odds for survival would have been better. Four veteran German divisions in massive fortifications waited for them, their 77th, their 709th, 242nd and 91st, plus units from the 12th SS Panzer, Panzer Lehr and 2nd Panzer Divisions, in addition to thousands of fortress and service troops. Getting onto the beach after war was an

accomplishment. But that proved to be child's play compared to what they faced when they were finally able to push inland. The countryside was filled with hedgerows and crisscrossed with ditches. Behind every hedgerow was a Nazi machine-gun nest and a small combat team, completely hidden. Each time Finnski's company came to a corner they lost three men. Their first two days in France they were able to move less than two miles.

Like all men tasting battle for the first time, Finnski made some important decisions. One was that he wanted the best weapon for this hard-to-hand, face-to-face combat they were experiencing. So the first time he came across a dead GI with a grease gun, he took the weapon and left his carbine alongside the corpse. The grease gun was a new weapon then. It looked just like its nickname. It was a rapid-fire submachinegun with an adjustable shoulder stock made of two steel rods instead of wood. It was very light and fired 45 bullets which were fed from foot-long clips. The grease gun wasn't accurate beyond 70 feet and it had a tendency to jam up and to the right. But within its range and from any

position it could cut a man in half.

That's exactly what Finnski's gun did the first time he used it. Because he had joined his squad at the very last minute, he wasn't part of the main effort. So he hung back as they moved and tried to fit himself into their operation as best he could. It happened during a sudden artillery barrage that seemed to have been ordered specifically for them. Automatically, all of the squad jumped for the ditch. Except Finnski.

The closest ditch was across one of the intersections that had been proving so costly. So he simply flung himself onto the road. And while lying there he could see through the bottoms of the hedges, spotting a German machine gun squad and the small combat team that usually went with it.

Finnski crawled backward until he came to a hole in the hedge and slithered behind it. There were eight Germans, their backs to him, three at the machine gun, five in the combat team. He could throw a lot of 45 slugs at them but they had all better be accurate because he wouldn't have an opportunity to change the clip that was then in his grease gun. And so he stood up, the best position to fire the grease gun from, and fired, from left to right, getting the machine gunners first and then, at least, wounding the members of the combat team, all with that first clip. When it was empty he jumped to one side, quickly changed clips and finished the job. Only two members of the combat team were able to get shots off and they were wild. By the time the second lieutenant in charge of the squad showed up, all of the Germans were dead.

"Evans," he said, looking from the dead men to Finnski, "I'm going to recommend you for a medal for this."

In the excitement Finnski had forgotten the name he was hiding behind and he looked around, wondering who the lieutenant was talking to.

But mishearing under the name Evans didn't change Finnski's personality. He made no friends in the new outfit, small things like toothpaste, magazines and books were stolen from various members of his squad and, of course, he remained no real Finnski also knew how to take care of himself. For example, he always seemed to have the best place to sleep, whether it was out in the field or in a farmhouse, hotel, school or other building that the squad took over for their quarters. When the unit moved forward, sometimes over

muddy, sloppy roads, Pinarik always managed to find a seat in a jeep or the tailgate of a truck to ride on.

Despite himself, Pinarik again became a hero. At one point, moving north toward Belgium, his company was ordered to take a church whose tower was being used as an artillery observation post. If it were up to the company commander, he would have called in air support or tried to knock the damned thing out with some of his own artillery. But too many churches had been destroyed since the Allied landing in Europe and the Free French Government had complained about it. So orders were sent to all units in the field that in no circumstances were churches to be made targets for anything larger than rifles. Unfortunately, the enemy seemed to have received copies of the order, because they continued to use churches in any way they pleased.

They moved out while it was still dark, the entire company on foot, everything that could possibly make a sound was either left behind or muffled in some way. As usual Pinarik went his own way, moving about 300 yards from the rest of the company and then parallel to them. He did this because the only human being he trusted was himself. He didn't want to pay the price for someone else's mistake. If that man was lost, attracted enemy attention or did something wrong, Pinarik didn't want to suffer the consequences.

Less than a mile from where they had started, Pinarik heard something — talking, whispering, not two or three but many men. He dropped to the ground and crept side to the top of a stone fence. There, ahead of him in the darkness, was what looked like several companies of Germans, all poised, all ready to attack. Most likely, they were planning to ambush his company.

Pinarik sped back to his company commander and reported what he had seen. Quietly and efficiently the Americans stopped. A quick plan was drawn up and the would-be ambushers were themselves surrounded. At a flare signal, they attacked. It was like shooting fish in a barrel in about half an hour those Germans who hadn't been killed, surrendered. The company commander again said he was going to recommend Pinarik for a medal.

Probably the biggest and most daring Pinarik ever did was capture a German general. It happened accidentally, in such things do.

Moving forward, at always a good distance from the rest of his unit, Pinarik stumbled onto a path where

he happened to spot the remains of a German cigarette. He followed the path for about a mile to a small shed and when he peered inside, he saw two Nazi colonels and a general studying a map.

He hoped to take all three men prisoners but both colonels were foolish enough to go for their patch. The general ran did what it was designed to do, literally cut them in half at that distance. The general never hesitated in raising his black-gloved hands over his head.

He was a Hollywood type of Nazi general, complete with moustache, shaved head and impeccable manners. He spoke perfect English and his first words were an order to Pinarik that he be taken to his headquarters immediately.

Pinarik studied the general carefully. There was something to be got from the general, he could smell it.

"General," he said "How'd you like to go free?"

The general looked at him without understanding.

"You know, if you can make it worth my while, I'd just let you go. But it's got to be big, nothing small. Otherwise I might not even bother taking you in. I could just let you join your buddies here."

The general turned white and looked down at the base prices of what had once been two colonels. "Yes, yes," he said "I understand. But you must permit me to contact my unit."

"The hell I will," Pinarik said. "No cut, no nothing. You have to come up with something on your own. I know you says, you been slaving for the past four years and you must have your stashed away somewhere so you can take it back home."

The general smiled. He had met a man, an American, who volunteered. There was nothing to do but take the Yank to his cache.

It was a precarious journey and they moved slowly, the general always at the end of the prisoner's muzzle. Several times they slipped between companies of German infantrymen, each time, the general moved as stealthily as Pinarik did. Finally, after several hours, they came to a barn. After making certain that it was deserted, Pinarik followed the general inside. There, the German pried a board from the wall and exposed a briefcase. Pinarik was still cautious. "You got it and bring it to me," he ordered. The general did and then opened it for his captor. The briefcase was stuffed with American dollars.

"Sixty thousand in all," the general said proudly, and then explained that it had come from a win that was used to pay spies and saboteurs behind Allied lines.

The general wanted to leave right then and there but Pinarik wanted him to accompany him back to his own line. When they arrived at the bar where they had first met, Pinarik opened fire and the general joined his two colonels on the earthen floor.

Pinarik transferred the money to his own pack and treated it as you would expect, using the pack as a pillow at night and never letting it out of his sight. But one night, when he was huddled down in a cedar mill, the Germans opened up with heavy artillery. The first shell hit the side of the mill, knocking the floor out from under the sleeping Americans. The second shell shook the building so badly that a mouse would have collapsed it.

Everyone ran out of the mill, including Pinarik. It was only when he was about 30 feet away that he realized his pack was still inside. He started to run back for it, and the rest of the men in the squad started for him to stop. But the next shell hit the mill squarely before he had gone three steps. Not only did it completely destroy whatever was left of the building, but it set the dry timbers on fire and Pinarik had no other choice but to watch \$60,000 go up in smoke.

Pinarik's misadventure finally came to an end in early September, 1944. The unit had just taken a town in Belgium called Reuten, and Pinarik was walking down the street



"It was absolutely horrible . . . his chairy hands peering at my legs, his leering at the mouth, his garbled speech, his heavy breathing . . . Of course, you had considering it was only his first rape."



"Just take 2 aspirins, a cold shower and call me tomorrow, Doctor."

when a captain stopped in front of him, pointed a couple of farts and said, "Hey." Pnarski recognized him right away as being from his old outfit, and he started to run. Unfortunately, a pair of MPs standing a few feet away had observed the chance meeting. And bad news comes in bunches. That very evening while Pnarski was sitting alone in a makeshift cell, the lock clicked and the guard looked in. "Someone to see you, kid," he said.

It was the company commander. "Hey, Evans," he said after the door had been closed behind him. "I don't

understand all of this. There must be some kind of a mistake, something about the replacement depot in England. Uh, you are Evans, aren't you?"

The court-martial was short and sweet. It lasted for only two hours, something of a record for court-martial. Pnarski didn't testify. The four judges put their heads together and conferred for about a minute, coming out of the huddle nodding in agreement.

The colonel stood up and said the court found the prisoner guilty on all counts. However, because of the extraordinary record he had made

since D-day, the court would not punish him. The only request the colonel made was that a notation be inserted in Pnarski's service record forbidding him to re-enlist in any of the armed services after the war was over.

Fat chance

Pnarski's story has long been forgotten and would have remained so except for the fact that Peter B. Randall, a war service reporter on duty in Saigon during the Vietnamese war, happened to be going through some papers in US Army headquarters. His eye lit upon the name Wayne Pnarski, Jr. The name rang a bell and he read further. For Wayne Pnarski, Jr. had been court-martialed for desertion from his unit, for stealing US Army equipment and selling it on the black market. But even though Pnarski had been found guilty, no sentence had been handed down.

Randall found Pnarski at the Ton Son Nhut airport just about to board a plane for the United States. The young man wouldn't talk about his father, whom he said he hadn't seen for more than 15 years.

But when Randall got back to the States, he looked up the name Pnarski in the Chicago telephone book and sure enough there it was. The last opportunity he got he traveled to Chicago, hoping to get a story, to tie up a like father, like son theme. The address in the telephone book turned out to be the address of a saloon called the Drop Dead Bar, Pnarski Sr. now in his mid-fifties, wended bar. There was no doubt that it was him — the mean face, the grimer eyes that looked at everyone as if trying to discover their weak points.

At first Pnarski didn't want to talk. Finally, after some persuading, he agreed but only if the story wasn't sent over the wires. Randall promised.

Pnarski admitted to having been married four times since World War II but was not living with any of his wives or speaking to any of his five children. He told Randall the story of his army experience, neither making himself a hero nor apologizing for what he had done. When he finished, Randall asked him about Wayne Jr.

"That little son of a bitch," the old man said. "He's stupid, so he got caught. Me? I wouldn't have been caught to this day, if it hadn't been for that captain."

Now Randall never sent his story over the wires. That means Pnarski has nothing to do with the war service.

NIGHT OF THE ONION

Continued from page 28

having any effect on him. It was no time to think about that, though.

"Come back here," the guy in the distance called.

"Okay," the guy near them said. Jorgensen broke the kiss and asked a look round. He saw the tall figure retreating behind the grey curve of the sand. There were other voices in the distance. He climbed to a crouching position. It seemed they were all right for the moment.

The girl was stirring. She was shaking the sand from her hair-dress.

"Oh," she said. "Oh, thank you. Oh, God, I don't know how I can ever thank you."

"We're not out of it yet," Jorgensen told her.

"Where are we?"

He didn't feel like delivering a geography lecture. He didn't know where she was from, anyhow. He didn't know how long they'd had her in the car.

"They're just along there still," he said.

"Oh, it was horrible. They stopped next to me and then two of them just grabbed me into the car, and then they were pulling at me in the back for hours. They kept asking me would I do an onion for them. They kept saying they'd onion me."

Jorgensen nodded. He knew the expression.

"And they kept trying to take my clothes off. And then they drove all the way out here. They said they'd onion me on the sand. And they got me out and I couldn't stop them. And then two of them . . ."

Her voice was rising. She was getting hysterical again. "That's all right," he said quickly. "How do you feel now, anyway?"

"Oh, I feel awful. I feel terrible."

He didn't think it was quite as bad as that. She'd already been able to run a good way. But she'd had a really bad shock, and she could have internal injuries. The sooner he got her out to a doctor, the better.

He could still hear the voices. They sounded back over toward the road. Now they had a clear run back to his tent, and the dark buggy.

"Come on," he said.

The girl followed unquestioningly. Jorgensen was able to think ahead. Get the buggy, then out along the track, over the bridge, back to the main road. Then the police. Maybe he'd find a local station, maybe he'd be able to phone them. Then hospital.

They were at the camp. He led her past the tent and helped her up into the buggy.

"What about your things?" she said.

"They won't worry about them?"

"What were you doing here?"

"Fishing," he said. He was fumbling with his keys.

Then there was a flicker of light over on their right. The Valiant's headlights were on. Then they heard the big car's engine start.

Jorgensen turned the ignition key and tripped on the accelerator. Maybe they wouldn't hear the buggy's engine. It was too late to worry now, anyhow. He couldn't let them out him off from the bridge.

"Hold on," he shouted.

The dark buggy bounced back for a three-point turn, then swayed toward the track, the aged six-cylinder engine roaring high. Jorgensen watched the Valiant's headlight glow out of the corner of his eye. It was steady on the track, heading back toward them.

They found the track in the

moonlight and swung left on to it. He still didn't have his lights on. It'd be better if the Valiant's driver didn't know exactly where they were for a while. It'd . . .

The Valiant was right behind them and it had them in its headlights. The head flicker of the beam crossed them, picking out the man of the window and the dashboard. The Valiant was getting fast. It was nearly on top of them.

Jorgensen yanked the wheel and the dark buggy veered off the track. Now he had to get his lights on, to pick a path on the sand, to keep them turning over. The Valiant thundered past, and he heard a clunk as its bottom hammered down on a rock. Now it was turning, too. It was slowing.

The buggy turned through the Valiant's headlight beams, and Jorgensen blinked and looked away. He was heading back for the track. He switched his own lights off again.

The Valiant accelerated, heading along the track to cut him off. He had to pull up short and veer away





"I'm having complications. I don't know whether to make it with the day or night nurse."

again. He couldn't risk a collision there.

The Valiant was heavy and clumsy, and low on the ground. It couldn't turn as close as the buggy, and it couldn't risk going out on the soft sand. But it was more powerful, faster, fast enough to cut the VW buggy off every time. Jorgensen didn't know what would happen if both cars made it through to the main road. He'd have no chance of pulling clear of it then.

Jorgensen started and drove for the track again. The Valiant was waiting, and it lurched forward. This time, Jorgensen showed short of it, and flicked his headlights on for a couple of seconds. Then he swung right, past the Valiant's tail, across the track and over the sand-bump on the far side.

He glanced aside briefly at the girl. Her mouth and eyes were wide, and she was holding on tight. The seat-belt had caught and dragged her dress away to the side. Her large breasts shook like jelly on the buggy's jolt. But she was all right where she was for the time being.

Now he'd gained a few seconds. He hoped the Valiant's driver had been looking his way when he snugged the beam on back there. He made a half circle left, back on to the track.

In his mirror he saw the Valiant was backing. He'd gained a few more seconds — the driver had nosed off the road. For a moment he hoped it was bogged in the sand, but then he saw the lights come round. It was coming on land behind the buggy. He knew he'd have to keep on with the crazy drill for a while yet.

He made it over the top of the hill ahead of the Valiant. But the big car made up ground on the slope down towards the bridge. He yanked the wheel round, and the buggy's big tyres turned on the sand again. The Valiant roared past in the dark,

sounding like a tank. It had left its rafter back there somewhere on the track.

Jorgensen hoped the Valiant's driver didn't have enough imagination to go straight down and park on the bridge over the creek. It was a one-lane wooden thing, and he couldn't get past there. Then it'd be back to the beginning for everybody, four against one, then they'd have the girl . . .

The youth in the Valiant wasn't that smart. He turned short of the bridge, waiting for the dare buggy to come up. Jorgensen stopped too, dropping to first, keeping his foot on the clutch. The first thing was to get over the bridge. Then they'd see . . .

He remembered the place from daylight. There was head standing in a wide area just short of the bridge. The Valiant would have room to manoeuvre. Or would it . . .

He let in the clutch and went right, across the tracks, around to the Valiant's left. The Valiant moved forward and started to turn, then backed. Suddenly Jorgensen stepped on the accelerator, shooting forward past the Valiant, back across the track at right angles. The Valiant's engine roared as it followed.

Now it was behind him again. This time, though, there was room to get out of its way and still keep a good speed. Jorgensen put the wheel on hard lock, turning inside the Valiant, making a complete circle. They bounced across the track again. There was the bridge. Next time . . .

Next time round, he showed and showed on course for the bridge. The Valiant was accelerating behind him, soaking on the greasy uneven sand. The sound of its engine was in his ear. He was on the track, going on to the bridge. The Valiant . . .

The wooden planks of the bridge were creaking, vibrating under the dare buggy's thick tyres. He had to slow to keep on course. The Valiant's

lights blazed in his mirror, yards behind.

Then he heard the splash, wood on metal. He made a split-second glance over his shoulder.

The Valiant's left-hand wheel had hit the wooden kerb along the side of the bridge. The Valiant was in the air for a second, smashing through the plank railing. It was off the bridge, sailing in a topping arc into the darkness over the creek. Jorgensen was already slowing off the end of the bridge when he heard it hit the water. The big headlights went out.

He bounced off the track, down to the bank of the creek. There was nothing there. The salt-water channel was deep enough to cover the Valiant. There were a few bubbles out from the bank, that was all.

They watched and nobody came up. "Were they all in there?" said the girl.

"I don't know," said Jorgensen. One second the Valiant had been there, now it was gone. It was hard to adjust to something happening so fast.

"Are you going in after them?"

"No."

He wasn't good in the water, and he felt too weak still. And it didn't make sense to rescue somebody who'd probably turn on him as soon as he was safe. And they'd asked for a, anyway.

They waited a while longer. The bubbles stopped. There was a trace of oil on the surface.

"We might as well get going,"

Jorgensen said.

He gave the girl his shirt to wear. Suddenly she broke down again. Maybe she'd never seen death before. He took her in his arms and kissed her again a long time, and stroked her smooth soft body, steadily, gently, her breasts and belly and legs. It gave them both something else to think about. She calmed after a while.

They found a police station in the second town along the highway. A sergeant and a constable were on duty. They stared when he brought the girl in.

The constable had got aside a magazine, Sports Car World. He stood when Jorgensen gave him a name.

"Dave Jorgensen. Are you the driver?"

"That's right," said Jorgensen.

"Yeah, I've seen you race. You were in that big smash at Amaroo last June."

"That's right."

"Yeah, that was a bad one. You're OK again now, are you?"

Jorgensen thought of the night's driving. "I guess I must be," he said.

LOGO TRAP

Continued from page 48

with passion. "This trick is just about going to get you killed, Morry."

"I wouldn't count too strong on that." With a deft movement, Morry scooped Weir's gun. "Now suppose you tell the boys the three of us are going to have a little pow-wow. Sort of hunt for them to wait here."

An instant only Weir hesitated, then as the gun barrel nudged him suggestively, he spoke pettily. "Wait here, boys, while I have a little talk with our — friends."

Following orders, Weir turned away. Instantly Luke Morry stepped close to his side. To the westward, it merely seemed that the two men departed almost arm in arm. For Morry had skillfully shifted the signal so that it pointed against the gambler's ribs.

The little procession proceeded silently to the corral gate. Luke Morry addressed his partner. "Snap our gear on the bed naps you can locate."

Doyle faded into darkness. With the captive, Morry moved toward the deeper shadow beside the stable. Weir stopped. "What are you figuring to do with me?"

"Aimed to look you up," Luke returned gently. "For safe keeper, you might say."

"Don't be a fool!" Weir growled. "Look here, Morry, you've got brains. I can use a man like you. Throw in with me, and we can run things in this part of the country."

"Now that's real interesting," Luke conceded. "Only I never was partial to turning up with a skunk. Don't like the smell none."

Weir shrugged. "Sorry you take it that way." He started to turn, side-stopped like a flash and grabbed for the gun. Morry struck the clucking fingers down. At the same moment he crushed the barrel of the Colt across the gambler's temple, and Weir crumpled soundlessly.

Doyle was leading the horses out when his tall companion appeared silently at his side. They mounted hastily. "We'll take the back way," Luke Morry directed, low-voiced. "Some of the boys figure on an heirloom's permanent residents. No sense in letting 'em know we got other notions."

A hot breeze stirred in the draw, whipping up the powdery dust and heralding the approach of another day of blistering heat. Shading his eyes against the level ray of the rising

sun, Luke Morry looked down to where the draw lost itself in Mineral Sink. A group of bobbing figures caged around a shoulder of granite.

The tall driver spoke his thoughts aloud. "Not over two miles behind. And from the looks o' things I'd say they picked up fresh horses after they left Sky High."

Doyle touched dry lips with his tongue. "And sure most were out. They's going to be powder burned 'fore we get to the end of this trail."

"Can happen," Morry shrugged. The two rode on, saving their ponies as much as possible.

The draw stretched ahead of them endlessly, heat-stricken, utterly barren. They covered several miles. Now they could make out the heat-blurred outlines of Sandhill Rock, where the draw widened out as it entered Good Indian Valley.

Luke Morry looked back over his shoulder. Not more than half a mile now separated partner and pursued. His eyes narrowed thoughtfully.

"Going to be close, pard," Doyle shouted. He was grinning, his dust-stained eyes burned with excitement.

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when the horse stumbled, went down. Doyle was flung clear.

Luke Morry reined in, curving back. Doyle was on his feet. His face was haggard but his eyes did not waver. "Hide for it, pard. My back's run out."

Morry made no answer. Leaping from the saddle, he caught Doyle by the shoulder, swung him from the ground in mid-air. Doyle's foot found the stirrup. A scramble and he swung himself behind his comrade.

His voice rose breathlessly. "You

darn fool! You could a-made it alone. Now."

"Shut up!" Morry snapped. A puff of dust blossomed close behind them. A second later came the flat crack of a rifle.

Morry's jaw muscles tightened, bunching under the skin. He turned the horse, seeking for the break in the face of one limestone wall. Jagged masses of black lava almost choked the entrance. If they could reach the shelter of the rock, they had a fighting chance. But could they make it before their enemies cut them off?

Weir and his men were spurring in. Suddenly the partners had lost a usual two hundred yards to go now. And then Morry felt the horse quiver, distinctly heard the slap of the bullet as it smashed into living flesh. With a warning shout to his partner, he kicked free from the stirrup, jumped clear as the animal went down.

Luke Morry landed on his feet. Clem Doyle had fallen to his knees, but he was up in an instant. One quick glance Morry flung over his shoulder. Their partners were so close he could see the gleam of Milt Weir's bared teeth. The next second he was sprinting for the rocks. Behind them the liberty gang opened up with a ragged volley.

Clem Doyle was struggling to rise, but it was too late. Morry lifted his arms in a token of surrender. Dust eddied up in a haze close as the liberty gang surrounded them.

Weir rode in close, murky eyes lit with a savage glow. He did not speak, but a muscle twitched at one corner of his tight set mouth. He leaned forward in the saddle. Slowly,



"Well, I've got news for your mother. It's not only at heart that you're still a little boy."

deliberately, the muzzle of his Colt came up. Like a coiled rattler he was preparing to strike.

Morry did not flinch, his gaze held Wear's steadily. But his nerves vibrated.

"Grab for the sky, the lot of you. We've got you covered!"

The moment or two of silence that followed the command was tense with explosive possibilities.

"You're a few minutes late to suit in on the reward, Sheriff. We claim these men as our prisoners."

"Is that a fact?" Wheeler exclaimed. He smiled maliciously. "Happens there ain't no reward offered, Matt. There won't any stage robber, either, not this last time. That was a setup job. Luke figured you'd fall for it. Now suppose you grab for your men and do it quick!"

Watching Wear, Luke Morry saw his pupils narrow to pinpoints, but the gambler's voice was deceptively smooth. "Quite a trick, eh, Sheriff? Our friend Morry is smart, very smart." His lips twisted in a quick snarl. "Too bad he won't live to enjoy the reward of his wits."

With the words, Wear sprang the horse savagely. The animal reared.

But Luke Morry had not been caught napping. He threw himself aside, felt the bullet tug at his coat. Then the weapon he had snatched

from the holster backed hard against his palm.

Wear straightened convulsively. His horse was already at a dead run. For a brief space of time he stayed in the saddle; then he plunged headlong to earth.

Morry turned to find Clem Doyle on his feet. His partner shook his head, groaning deeply. "Bullet tore the heel off my boot. Felt like it had busted up my whole leg. Luck was awful in both."

"Which is puttin' it mild," Wheeler put in. "You boys took a mighty long chance."

Morry stroked his chin. "You showed up just in time, Bart."

"Well, that was luck, too," Wheeler answered. "Some of the boys were for waitin' at the Rock. But I had a hunch. We moved on this mornin'. Was less than half a mile away when we heard the first shot. We been doubtin' our bets on lady luck ever since you got the idea of the lake hold-up."

"Don't know as I'd make it that strong, Bart," Morry declared thoughtfully. "Strikes me we used our heads some, figuring that when you want to get a well out in the open, it's easier to hot him out than to go in his den and grab shield of his tail."

THE GOLGOTHA OF SADDLEBAGS

Continued from page 37

"Clubfoot, it wasn't your fault. It was mine. I shouldn't of bet."

Then he looked at the man with the big Adam's apple and he raised his brows at him and nodded sharply. The index finger of his right hand crooked several times, and he walked off towards his house.

The man with the big Adam's apple rubbed his hands together and spat.

"We know all alone," he said. "I could see it would come to this." His eyes wandered across the river and made a private journey up to the scrub behind Saddlebags. He left the group and followed Gallopah, but on the edge of the manuka where the track to the houses began he turned and threw a calculating glance up.

The sight of the men returning with the rifle had an effect on the group. Some of the men had eyes only for the blue barrel and the smooth stock but others shook the women away. The women walked towards the houses and each woman's head was down, and when they had gone the men watched the man with the rifle drop down the bank to the river and cross over on the stepping stones. They could see the tops of the scrub moving as the man forced his way towards the bridge. Up behind the bridge they saw when the scrub stopped moving.

Because everyone was waiting for it and had applied their ears of all other sound the crash of the rifle seemed to be the loudest noise heard at The Bend. Over the river by Clubfoot Regan's house it had a hard flat ring to it, like two boards being slapped together, but to the men below the bridge it came as a roar. By and by they heard a fragment of the sound fleeing up the gorge as a high whimper and they saw that the head of the horse was down.

"It was a clean shot," said the man with the rifle when he came back. With the rifle held easily in one hand he looked up at the house. "Yes, it was clean."

It was then that Clubfoot Regan uttered the thing that worried them long after. What he said worried them through the winter while the socks on the bridge rotted and the planks often ran crockets of water, and it worried them well into the Spring.

"Shooting him," said Clubfoot thoughtfully, "hasn't changed any thing. We still got to get him down."



"Now hold it, Alex. He's a lover, not a fighter."



"On the house, Mac. I can't remember a more interesting face."

bottles clank as his fingerprints would not be superimposed over the prints of other people who should have handled the bottles only after him."

"But why drag Dillon and the girl at all?" Donald asked.

"For two reasons - first, to be sure they wouldn't wake up while he was in the room, and second, so that Dillon would remain asleep until the next morning and, if possible, be discovered in the embarrassing position of being found in bed with a dead body beside him. To achieve that, Krauss set the alarm clock for 10 o'clock and completely closed the heavy curtains because, if you remember, the propellers in the other wing of the motel saw them go to bed and put out their light so the curtains must have been at least partly open when they went to bed. Krauss did not want either the alarm clock or daylight to wake Dillon before he could be found beside the corpse."

Donald frowned. "I suppose that's all fairly logical as far as it goes. I must admit it does explain a few things that didn't make sense. But how did Krauss manage to leave the room with the door still chained on the inside?"

"That was not as difficult as it sounds," Hodgkins said, smiling. "The murder probably took place about 10:30 - that is half an hour after Dillon and the girl put out their light and about three-quarters of an hour after the judge went upstairs to his room. Now, the judge said he went to bed about eleven o'clock. Right?"

"So Krauss had plenty of time to kill the girl - then, his wife - and attend to all of the other matters I've

mentioned well before the judge went to bed at eleven."

"Yes, So?"

"So when he'd done what he came to do Krauss sat down on the floor near the connecting door and watched the judge through the keyhole. You will see from the plan that the chair from which the judge would have watched television is directly opposite the door."

"If you're going to tell me that Krauss got out through the judge's room after the judge went to sleep you can forget it," said Donald. "He could have escaped through there if he had murdered the girl before the judge arrived but you and yourself that the girl probably wasn't murdered until about 10:30 - and our doctor says it was no earlier than that - so the judge was already in his room watching television when the murder was committed. And Krauss couldn't have crept through the room after the judge had gone to sleep because the safety chain would not have been in place when the maid woke the judge next morning."

Hodgkins held up his hand. "Your objections are quite valid, Donald, but you didn't allow me to finish. Now, where were we? Ah, yes. Krauss is sitting on the floor watching the judge through the keyhole. At eleven o'clock the judge turns off the television, comes to the connecting door, turns the handle to make sure the door is locked, then begins to undress. Quickly Krauss unlocks the connecting door and opens it a fraction. The judge doesn't notice because the room is not brightly lit. Krauss watches and waits for his opportunity."

"But it never occurs," said Donald, "because the judge is positive he never left the room."

"Ah. But that depends upon what he meant by 'the room.' Tell me, Donald, what do you always do before you go to bed?"

"Don't play games," said Donald impatiently.

"I'm perfectly serious. But let us go back to the point where Krauss has unlocked the connecting door and is waiting for his opportunity to escape to the corridor through the judge's room. The judge puts on his pyjamas, picks up his toothbrush and goes into the bathroom. The bathroom door closes automatically behind him. Krauss comes through the connecting door into the judge's room, locks the door behind him and goes quietly out of the judge's door to the corridor. Later the judge puts the safety chain in place before going to bed."

"By God, it could have happened that way," said Donald, suddenly stumped.

"I'll bet a year's pension it did. Finding that broken chain in Krauss' room clinches the case against him. His affair with one of the receptionists also is important since she could have supplied him with the keys necessary to carry out his plan."

Donald stood up. "I think I'll have another talk with Mr Krauss and his blonde friend right away."

At three-thirty next morning Donald was sitting in the kitchen drinking coffee when Hodgkins joined him.

"Has Krauss confessed?" Hodgkins asked.

Donald shook his head. "Not yet, but it hardly matters anyway. His girlfriend tipped the bucket on him. He'd told her the whole plan. Apparently he became suspicious that his wife was seeing another man and had followed her. He soon found out they spent at least two nights a week at that particular motel, so he bribed the woman who worked there to go on holidays and recommended him to the manager as a temporary replacement. He told the receptionist he wanted to set up Dillon and his wife in a compromising situation for divorce evidence. Our fingerprint experts did a thorough job on the murder room and found his prints on the safety chain, the tap, the handles on both sides of the connecting door and on the handles on both sides of the judge's door. We've got him cold. The receptionist will finish him off when we put her in the witness box."

"What about Dillon? Have you released him yet?"

Donald snapped his fingers. "Thanks for reminding me. I'll see to that now." He reached for the telephone.

THE OWEN GUN STORY

Continued from page 25

it could be easily mass-produced, cheaply and quickly. He found that the designer lived nearby, and he took up the matter with Mr Kensington Lewis, the chief general manager of BHP.

Kensington Lewis was also impressed with the design. He promptly sent Owen to see Captain C. M. Dyer, Secretary of the Army Inventions Board, in Melbourne.

Kensington Lewis had recently been made Director-General of Munitions, and Captain Dyer gave Owen a much better reception than the Ordnance staff in Sydney had the year before. In any case, after a year of war, the value of such a weapon had become painfully obvious.

The first call for a submachinegun came from the Western Front armies in World War I, when a close-range weapon for clearing enemy trenches was needed. Each army found a different answer, at the time.

The British introduced the Lewis light machine gun, found that that was still too heavy, and went back then to the bayonet and the hand

grenade. The Germans experimented with their Luger pistol, using a clumsy drum magazine. The Americans tried changing their Colt .45 automatic pistol, then introduced the Browning automatic rifle — which was closer to the Lewis gun than to what was really needed.

But in the end, the Americans found the right answer. The Thompson submachinegun appeared in the 1920s — just in time to become the favorite weapon of the prohibition gangster era.

The "Tommy gun" was very heavy, but strong and finely machined. It could be fitted by one man from the shoulder on the waist, and it could hammer out 10-45 calibre shots a second.

But despite the publicity given to it by Mr Capone — or because of it — the Thompson wasn't widely used at first. A few hundred were sold to the US Marines, and a few thousand to security agencies. The rest lay in storage.

World War II changed all that. In the 1930s the Germans had developed the Schmeisser submachinegun as an assault weapon, and its value was shown in the fighting before Dunkirk. The

Thompson was thrown back into production, and hundreds a week were soon being turned out in America.

Most of them went to the US service, and a few to Britain. The British were developing their own submachinegun, the Sten. But the Sten was still in the design stage in 1940, and few of the Thompsons had trickled out to Australia.

At the outbreak of war, in fact, there were only two submachineguns in Australia — an experimental German Bergmann machine pistol captured in World War I, which was a trophy at the Small Arms School at Randwick, in Sydney, and a Schmeisser which Costello had seized from a German ship passenger in Sydney and given to the New South Wales Police.

Early in 1940, Captain E. W. Litchford, the chief instructor at the Small Arms School had bought a .45 Thompson from a planter in the Solomon Islands for use at the school. This was all the experience of submachineguns the Australian Army at home had had. No small arms of any kind had ever been developed in Australia.

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gun, then, be realised that it might be what the army was looking for. Despite disengagement from some of his superiors, who thought it might be safer to wait for the British Sten gun, he arranged firing trials and had the Lynght company make more models.

Owen was given duty leave from the AIF, and helped Lynghts make 32 and 45 calibre models of the gun in the next two months. After successful firing trials of the 32 model, using Russian automatic pistol cartridges, Private Owen went to Melbourne again for an Ordnance Department meeting.

Owen learned that the army had now decided that it did want submachineguns — but it wasn't sure if it wanted Owen's. Many senior officers preferred to wait for the Sten gun from England, which they

expected to be a more sophisticated weapon.

In fact, the Sten gun was to be a "cheap and nasty" weapon like the Owen design, not a finely-tuned product like the Bren. It was designed for rapid production to meet the threat of invasion. But nobody in Australia knew that at the time.

The Owen gun's future hung in the balance. There were delays in testing it, because of the lack of suitable ammunition. At the same time, it was hard to decide what calibre it should finally be produced in. The Sten was coming out in 9 mm calibre, to make use of captured German ammunition stocks — but that calibre wasn't made in Australia.

By then the Owen was no longer a secret. Questions were asked about it in Parliament, which drew comment

in the Press. Private Owen's weapon was becoming a subject of controversy.

Then the government stopped in in an unorthodox move, it took the matter out of the army's hands by placing an order with Lynghts for 100 Owen guns in both .45 and 9 mm calibre.

It was a denial of the principle that the army should decide its own needs — but it brought fast results. The order was placed in June, 1941. By September, some of the guns of each calibre were ready to be tested against Thompsons and Stens at Sydney's Long Bay rifle range.

Firearms experts watched as officers and warrant officers blasted the range targets with thousands of rounds. None of the weapons was very accurate — but with pistol-calibre cartridges and short barrels, that was to be expected. Each fired about 600 rounds a minute.

But the Owen performed as well as the Thompson and the Sten in extreme conditions, when it was wet or clogged with mud, it performed better. It proved to be a reliable and effective weapon.

On the strength of the trials, the Army Minister, Mr. Spender, increased the order from 100 to 3000. In November, 1941, there was more Press criticism of the army's attitude — but by then the Owen gun was already in full production.

The army settled on 9 mm as the Owen's calibre — partly as a safety measure, because the Sten was also going into production and the army wanted the same cartridge for both.

The first version of the Owen gun to go into production weighed about nine and a half pounds, with a loaded magazine — more than the Sten, but less than the Thompson. It had a plain wooden shoulder stock — more comfortable than the Sten's staff-like arrangement. Its magazine was fitted to take a standard magazine.

The straight top-mounted magazine held 32 rounds, although usually only 32 were loaded as a precaution against jamming. The action was simple. Cocking forced the heavy bolt back on a spring, and pulling the trigger released it forward. The bolt picked up a round on the way, shoved it into the chamber, and the fixed firing pin struck the primer. The explosion of the cartridge in the chamber sped the bullet away down the barrel, and at the same time it pushed the bolt back on the spring. If the trigger was held down, it would return for the next shot a fraction of a second later.

The change lever by the thumb of



"My wife fell overboard about two hours ago. Whom should I notify?"

the right hand selected automatic, single shot or safe. Diggers were taught to fire rapid single shots for accuracy, with bursts reserved for close-range emergencies.

The blow-back action absorbed some of the power of the cartridge, so the Owen had a low muzzle velocity. The bullet was ineffective at long range. But the Owen was useful for close-quarters work — 100 yards from the shoulder, 25 from the waist — and at that range its fire was deadly.

By mid-1942 the production Owen guns were coming out of the Dugouts factory. They went straight out to combat units, and within a few months they were in service in New Guinea.

War experience suggested minor modifications — but they didn't take long to make. The Owen was simple to construct, and production time was short. More and more orders were placed, as the weapon proved its value in close-range action in the hills and jungles of the New Guinea front.

For a while, the Australian Army was using all three submachineguns. But the Thompson's 45 calibre ammunition made it the odd man

out, and it was taken out of service when there were enough Owens and Stens to go round.

The diggers who used both the 9 mm weapons came out in favour of the Owen. It was easy to grip, easy to clean and easy to load. Its magazine could be loaded by hand, but the Sten needed a separate metal "filler".

Frontline troops found the Owen would keep firing in mud-bath conditions, where the Sten would clog and jam. That was because the Sten had a side-mounted magazine, which let mud and dirt collect inside. But the Owen's magazine and body were open at the bottom, so most dirt fell straight out. Empty cartridge cases fell out the same way when the bolt blew back, so there was less chance of them jamming it.

The Sten and the Owen had the same ballistic performance, but reliability put the Owen in front. In time it became the standard "forward area" machine carbine, and the Sten was issued as a security weapon behind the combat zone.

In December, 1943, the British Ordnance Board carried out comparative tests of six submachineguns in England. The tests gave clear proof

of the Owen gun's quality. It was rated first in four tests out of five, and first in overall merit.

In combat, the Owen was used as an assault weapon for clearing Japanese fox-holes, and it was the standard weapon for infantry section scouts. It was a handy weapon for ambush parties for quick killing at close range, and for snipe patrols who could escape behind its high volume of fire. The Japanese had nothing like it.

By the end of World War II, more than 45,000 Owen guns had been made, equipping all the frontline troops of the Australian Army. After the war most of them were painted and stored for a few years. Then they came out again to equip the diggers who served in Korea. They were still highly regarded by the men who used them.

The Owen's third war was the long Malayan "emergency", when Australians served in the British Commonwealth forces which saved Malays from Communist terrorists. That was another jungle war, fought at close quarters — the conditions the Owen was designed for.

By the time of the Vietnam war, the Army had decided it needed a

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replacement for the Owen. It took the British Sterling submachinegun as a model — but instead of its S&W-like side-mounted magazine, they gave it a top-mounted magazine like the Owen. The Owens were left with reserve mags, and then put in stock as the new P1 machine carbines became available.

There are probably a lot still in store, although it's not likely now that they'll ever be used again. But in their day they played a vital part in Australia's defence, and showed that Australia could produce from scratch a weapon equal to anything

developed abroad.

Francis Evelyn Owen spent the war assisting in the development of his weapon. It was patented, and he received a royalty of five shillings a gun. Before the end of the war he sold the rights to the government for another 1000 pounds.

Owen died a few years later, still a young man. At that time, the weapon he designed still had a decade of service ahead — and the generation of Australian Diggers who used it in the Pacific war had already cut the Owen name deep in the stone of history.

DEATH RUN OF THE LONELY GIANT

Continued from page 13

65 tons going at full speed. A bomb couldn't have been more effective. The boat was shattered to broken boards that flew skywards, and Catodon's great blunt head, followed by the masts and the rest of his body, leaped through the two separated fragments of bow and stern.

Broken men were scattered in a ring around him. Above them (those who were conscious) towered Catodon still in a vertical position, a black shadow that blotted out the sun. Slowly he came over, then faster, faster, his body accelerated in a fall to the water. Men below screamed and tried to swim away. The whale's body crashed and water erupted on both sides. Then the great furies rose and fell, and the men behind who had escaped the crushing of Catodon, were hurled out of the water or battered into it. Of the 26-man crew, eight lived, only one was unharmed.

In the course of time the hump rope rotted away, and the metal humpson barb became encrusted in his flesh.

Catodon swam steadily, occasionally diving in his endless search for his staple diet of cetidfish. He recognized these waters off the coast of South America by taste, temperature, salinity, a dozen different tests his body could give it. Without putting on any special speed he covered more than 50 miles a day, always travelling south. As he entered the cold Falkland Current, he heard a hideous chattering behind him, the signal that prey had been scented, the hunting cry of the killer whales.

A rush of fear filled the massive whale. They were the one terror of the sea that not even he could defeat. Thick torpedoes of destruction, brilliant beasts who co-operated magnificently for mutual benefit. Compared to them, whales were morose. These raffish-looking chasers with their white eye patch could catch anything and ate everything, meat preferably — and right now Catodon was their choice, the didn't accelerate, only maintained the steady pace that kept him surging through the sea. All the while he was thinking, plotting. There were no ways to escape a pack of orcas — except suicide. Many whales threw themselves on the beach and died rather than be eaten alive. Catodon refused that: he had always fought for survival, and there was this



strange rendezvous he was impelled to keep far in the south.

As the killers approached, calling to each other to spread out to the flanks, Catodon increased his speed. It was not so much a quickening of the fluted tail as it was increasing the power of each stroke. Behind him, the killers leaped from the water often to observe their prey and within an hour were overtaking him, clattering in their shrill way to each other.

One darted ahead in the characteristic lightning charge. Her job was to dash in from the side, grab the lower lip, hang on till another came in from the opposite side. If more were needed, more would come, and eventually they'd pull the lower jaw open. Then one or two killers would dive into the mouth and rip out the tongue. It was the single fatal attack on a behemoth such as Catodon.

The whale rolled his eye, watching the ones pull ahead, observed it weave around in a black and white flash, the final attack. Catodon, without slowing speed, moved his head slightly to one side to keep the killer in view, and as the ones dove to attack from below and fasten on

the jaw, the great head dipped, the lower jaw opened and Catodon snugged her in the middle, crushed the 30-foot length with sheer weight. The massive head rose clear of the water, flipped the area to one side like a dismounted toothpick. Then Catodon shifted his head to get a view of the ones on the other side. That killer slowed his pace, veered away, pretended he was looking for something he dropped.

Behind, the gibbering of the pack rose to a shriek. It was generally agreed there were easier packages in the vast sea, and Catodon was left alone.

The water was growing colder now and as he passed the South Georgia Islands, he felt a quickening he hadn't known since his adolescent youth. As he dived and ate and swam, still outwardly placid, there was a sense of anticipation as though something wonderful was about to happen. He hurried his pace, nothing towards... towards he didn't know what.

Five days later he was through the Drake Passage between South America and the Antarctic Peninsula. And there, south of 45 degrees, off Adhade Island, the door to his long

gone youth opened. Fished were the aches and pains that had nagged him. Here was life, riotous life, life so plentiful it pushed and shoved and elbowed and gloried at the top of its lungs *I'm alive, I'm alive*. The plankton was a white fog, fish were silver clouds, seals dived and leaped and croaked in happiness. This was the Sea Paradise. All he had to do was open his mouth and inhale nourishment. Food rained down. The bottom was covered with his favorite succulents. After scores of years of incessant labor, he took his rest, wallowing in this luxury. Sometimes he threw himself out of the water in sheer joy, a thing he hadn't done since his frothy youth, but he was young again, well nourished, muscles rippling on his frame.

The boat slowly approaching didn't bother Catodon. He knew it was there. He had seen boats hundreds of times pulling nets behind them, and the stinky slow ones never bothered him. He was on the surface where his sycophant wasn't at its best, especially in the bright summer sun of the Antarctic. He couldn't see the flat-faced glimmer swinging the heavy mount around, waving directions to the men high in

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the wheelhouse, braving up both heat and explosive harpoon at Catodon.

The gun boomed as the crackling South Polar air and the heavy harpoons hurtled out, trailing its long black rope, streaking for the sperm whale. Just as the trigger was pulled, Catodon had barely waved his flukes, feeling the heat was coming too near, and the only thing he allowed near him were females of his kind. Because of his movement the hundred pounds of metal harpoon struck back, behind his vitals. It penetrated like a bullet hitting a man, then the face exploded, setting off a charge in his flesh, opening the terrible bulge that hooked the very meat of him.

Catodon leaped convulsively out of the water, the pain and shock lifting him straight up before he even knew he was wounded. Then he obeyed his first instinct and plunged down into the depths, moving as though hardened with ice.

Above, the excited crew had dipped the line around an electric watch and were making him fight the power of a machine. It didn't matter the shot hadn't scraped in his vitals and killed him, the experienced men knew it was only a matter of time.

The great whale pulled, drawing forward, trying to free the pain and just causing more of it. Only a pause brought down the level of torment and that lasted only till the line jerked but as the men reeled him in, and he threw himself against it, growling with the awful agony of ripped flesh.

How could he know that flesh and bone couldn't defeat the insatiable power of a machine? He tugged and strained and blew while he learned.

The one thing he did know from an experience far back in his memory was that man was his natural enemy — and had defeated him once. Catodon tried to go deeper but the sea was a nylon rope with an air hose in the middle that withered the dead

body of whaler while they were towed to the factory ship. It stretched under his frantic pulling power, a little even gave off the polished axle of the electric watch, and that was it. Catodon had had his flukes spelled out for him.

He charged straight up, driving. The men whirled their electric motor, taking in the shock. The gunner released his weapon. Lookouts watched the ocean, expecting to see a breaching whale.

The blunt head of Catodon rushing at full speed smashed the boat. The great whale expected to shatter it, keep on going through it. Instead there was a tremendous, dull, reverberating sound and he was repelled from the metal hull, groggy.

The electric watch was still working. The 10 inch barbs tore at him. He went wild with the pain, plunged down, dragging his off the smoking watch. Again he whirled and charged, smashed into the hull, hardly head on. Again and again he beat at it. A 65 ton sledhammer pounding and pounding. The boat started to bend.

The killer boat was going full speed, the wheel men trying to avoid the mad rushes, the crew pointed like flares to the deck. Another insane charge and the boat went out of line, the wheelmen now fighting the rudder to keep the boat in position.

Catodon saw the movement of the rudder, attacked that. His first rush bent it. Successive blows started tearing it from its mountings, and ground the teeth of the gears to useless rubs. Now out of control, the ship lurched in a turn, tearing the nylon rope that held Catodon around the propeller. A slice of pain at his back, the sharp blades ahead the line, and he was free.

He fled, fled from the madness. He fled through the night, flukes beating, muscles surging with the rhythm of pistons. All the next day he fled, still bleeding, trailing a

hundred yards of nylon rope behind him, Shorka howled in on the blood scent, drawn mad by it. Although they roared like demons and prepared themselves there was no chance of catching this leviathan. He didn't stop for food. He didn't stop for rest. He never stopped, he went on and on, using off his own body, absorbing tons of himself, fighting the toxin of fatigue. He was covering huge distances — something like 100 miles every 24 hours.

He still had great length but not bulk. He looked treads of blood from his gaping wound. He was slowing gradually and his undulations were awful whistles.

Word was spreading of the great wounded whale. He didn't know it, he didn't care that he was seen off the Gulf of San Mateo. Now he had an objective and that too was conquered, towing ship's radio operators. Where was he going?

Catodon knew. He had slowed now, was constantly on the verge of drowning, the blood filling his lungs. His powerful muscles were turning to strings. He was moving painfully, only his unknown purpose driving him.

North of Montevideo he was barely able to move at all without tremendous effort. Gasping for air, beyond his last reserves of strength, he worked on will alone. The thick blanket of blubber was gone. His copiously scored skin hung. Even his great proud head was shrunken and drooping, devoid of oil. Everything he had was going into those last few tail movements, and a number of ships were urging him on.

Heaving, dying, he was swept into the Brazil Current, passed and pointed, then dragged himself a little further, again a little further. He was where he wanted to be, in the warm waters. He shuddered and sank down, down into the comforting warmth where he had been born and lived — and died.

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THE RED CARD

Continued from page 21

won't let you loose without my say so."

"Oh." She sounded thoughtful. "Don't worry. I'll come down with you." He stretched, and rose from the bed.

Downstairs, he showed the red card.

They arrived at the Opera 20 minutes before curtain time. The foyer was resplendent with plush and uniforms, the air thick with tobacco smoke and perfume and loud conversation.

Tony saw it all, and glanced at him a little uncertainly.

Khrushov whispered to an usher. The men dipped away, returning in a moment or two with the manager, who looked faintly nervous.

The manager frowned, and they were whisked away.

Not only were there seats for them, Tony saw, but they were the best in the house.

Khrushov smiled at her, a little shyly, as if deprecating his feat.

He met her every evening, at the

early end of twilight, and for half an hour they strolled the streets, looking at shop windows, talking. The streets were still thronged with people, the mild evening had brought the city dwellers out in shirt-sleeves and summer blouses to stroll away the last hour of the day.

She touched his arm. "Wait."

He watched with mild interest as she ran across the pavement towards a flower seller, fumbling in her shoulder bag. In a moment she was back, clutching a bunch of spring flowers in a shiny tissue wrapping.

"Why didn't you ask?" he said. "I would have bought them for you."

He raised his eyebrows in good natured amusement, but said nothing.

The evening stretched out before them. The colors of the evening were muted now, the faces of the passers-by losing their identity in the growing dusk.

She turned suddenly, stepped into his path, and stopped. He looked down into the pale face, puzzled. She seemed suddenly nervous.

"There's something I must tell you now," she murmured.

"Oh?" he said, and felt the sudden fierce agony in his chest. His

eyes lost their focus, his mind frozen on the intensity of pain behind his breathless No, he thought, it can't be, not a heart attack . . . not at my age . . .

"For Dario," she said. "He was my brother."

The words rose to him on the opening perfume of the crushed flowers. Over her shoulder, as in a dream, he saw two policemen approaching, striding slowly down the pavement. He felt a hand searching his inner pocket and looked down at the crushed posy against his chest. As he watched, it fell, released, and as she moved away he saw for the first time the tell-tale half inch of steel knitting needle protruding from its small scarlet blossom on his shirt front.

She was gone now, moving towards the approaching policeman, who, among something wrong, were hurrying their pace towards him. But she had something in her hand.

As he began to breathe, and he began to blur at the edges, he saw her walk to the policeman and show them the red card . . . his red card . . . and walk past them as they turned away.

And that was the last thing he ever saw.

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Barefoot Blonde





Barefoot Blonde



"I AM THE MAFIA'S BAGMAN"

Continued from page 17

him for four or five blocks, but waited until they were just a few yards behind him before making his move. Then he slid off the bike, picked it up by the seat and handlebars and threw it at their windshield, smashing the glass in all over them. The car went out of control, lurching up on the sidewalk and crashing half its length through the window of a supermarket.

Draper went the rest of the way to Sonny Paris' on foot, arriving just about the time he'd told Chuckie Wells he'd get there. The incident tickled Sonny Paris. "Those of right as their lips, did you?" He didn't even bother to deny it when Draper accused him of hiring the two hoodlums. Instead, he said, "You got the right attitude, kid. The road must get through. I know all kinds of people that'll lay out big money for that kind of celebrity. Let me go talk to some of them and see what we can line up for you. I got a feeling you just took your first step on the road to a great career."

It probably seems things a little to think of a bag man as having a "great career". But there's no other underworld skill that's valued so highly or that makes such harsh demands on an individual's capacity to dish out violence and also take it.

The bag man carries money. It's

usually papered money involving gambling, narcotics or prostitution. It's always cash and during the period of its transit, it's always "up for grabs". No one is recognized as having a legal claim to it. So anyone who can get his hands on it can sell it his own.

"The first thing about a bag man is that he shouldn't call attention to himself," Ben Draper says as he looks back on 25 years of carrying the mail. "If you can stink the money in your pocket and ride it down on the subway without anyone spotting you, that's fine, that's great, that's the best you could do it. But you're not going to do it that easy too often."

"For one thing you're always going to be carrying too many bills to put in your pocket without looking as if you got a brick there. Here, all you got to do a look at the arithmetic of it. A million dollars in thousands — that makes a stack seven inches high. All right, most times you're going to be carrying it in smaller bills, tens, fifties and hundreds. So that means something to carry it in, a paper bag, a lunch box, a valise, an attache case, one of those long boxes like for carrying flowers. It could be anything, but it's got to be something. So you can't sit there looking all that innocent. You got something in your hands and you got to be careful with it."

"But even more important than that, there's this. Nine times out of 10 the people that are looking to

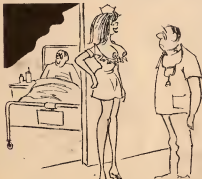
grab the money know it's you that's carrying it. I mean you're all in the same line of work. People know that's what I do. I'm not going to put on a beard and glasses and go sneaking past anyone. No, what's going to get me past people is having a 38 on me and everyone knowing I'll use it quicker than I'd sneeze. No thinking. No making up your mind. Someone looks at you a little cockeyed? Flip him. It's an instinct. Put it this way. They want to try taking the mail away from me? All right, that's their choice, but they know they could get themselves killed doing it. They know it's happened to 18 of them already."

Although Draper puts it all in the present tense, his bag man days are probably behind him. He's in protective custody somewhere in Washington, DC and doing some "wiring" for the Federal authorities. The situation came about because he was damaged in November of 1973 under conditions he considers highly suspicious. The gambler, Arnie Adams, gave him a stack of money to take from New York to someone in Denver, Colorado. But when Draper opened the bag to make a routine check of its contents, something inside it blew up in his face.

Although one eye was hanging out of his head and the flesh was coming off his face in shreds, he managed to get his 38 out and empty it into Adams' head before the gambler could make it out the door. Then he left the building, stopped a cab by pointing his revolver at the driver, and had himself driven to a hospital. The police were just seconds behind him and asking him questions while he was on the operating table.

They didn't have to probe him hard. Draper had already decided to co-operate. It was clear enough that he'd been marked for killing. He'd been around too long. He knew too much. There would be no dealing with those who wanted him done away with, particularly now that their first attempt had failed. The police were the only ones who could offer him any protection — the Federal Government, actually, since he'd functioned in an obscure way in most instances. But their protection was contingent on his "wiring" for them.

So Draper made the deal. He'd "sing". They'd protect him. There's also another part to the deal, some "payoff". He wanted a tape recorder. He's got it in his mind to write a book. "Valenti did it. They wrote a book about Joe Gallo, didn't they? So why not me?" There didn't seem



"First I got both hands occupied, then when he yelled 'Waaa' I shored down the medicine."

to be any reason not to let him have it.

And that's the way it is with Ben. During those days he's in a small apartment somewhere in Washington and there are at least two armed guards with him every minute of the day. They check his food. They go with him when he has to use the toilet. He's constantly being interrogated about his defence. How much? From whom? What for? To whom? They take him back and forth from the days he earned a few hundred dollars here or there for kidnapped whores to his "days of glory" as a trained courier for thousand-dollar-a-ship gamblers and drug dealers moving vast sums of money across national borders and over oceans. "I been to Europe eight-one times, I been in Cuba and South America, I been to Japan."

His interrogators know he's tricky, so they keep at him for long stretches of time, knowing they have an easier time with him when he's tired. It doesn't give him much time to himself, but when he has it he works on his book, hunching himself up to his nose and tapping into it — a chunky, balding man with a vacant eye socket and a face that looks as though someone ran over it with a well-sharpened lawn mower — "They took over two hundred fragments out of the paddocks one."

He doesn't lack a sense of humor ("the only reason I'm folding my cards is when do you find a hand to shake up with when you've got a loser like this?") but he's absolutely serious about his book. He thinks he's led a fascinating life and he wants to tell the whole world all about it.

Some excerpts follow.

I never thought about getting killed. I never thought about getting shot up. But attempts have been made. On my way out of Cuba once

with a bundle of Mafia cash to be delivered in Miami, one of Castro's guerrillas tried to plug me. They found out how much money I had somehow, and Castro must have wanted it to help him stage the revolution. Yet those things never bothered me. I didn't worry about them. The only thing I worried about was not delivering the mail. I'd have nightmares about people coming up and pinning at me and taking the mail or the value or whatever out from under my arm and the arm was numb so I couldn't move it, and I couldn't stop them from doing it. I'd wake up and I'd be wet from sweating and it was a thing that happened a lot of times, that kind of dream. Not delivering the mail. It could make me puke just thinking about it. Maybe that's why I was so good at it. There wasn't anything I wouldn't do to make sure I did.

Take that time in one of the big New York airports with thousands of people around while it was going on.

I'd been in London for a couple of days to pick up some money to bring to New York. Now, this was investment money. This was a stock broker named Fitz-Roberts investing a million two-hundred thousand in one of the big East Side drug rings. There were some political guys involved. They were protective the ring and it was their idea to let Fitz-Roberts in as a favor to him because he is doing some kind of favor to them over there.

All right, Fitz-Roberts got the money and he asked me what did I want to carry it in. I said just some kind of regular bag that they'd let me put under the seat instead of having to check it through. He found me something you could use for an overnight and then the two of us packed the money in it.

Fitz-Roberts looked at it sitting there in those men's neat packs with a

thick rubber-band around each of them and he said, "How does it feel walking around with a bag in your hand knowing it's got a fortune in it?"

I said, "This trip it's not the money I'm going to have on my mind. It's not having my gun."

I was going to be leaving from Heathrow and they were really checking you over careful there because they were worried about bombings. There was no way I'd be able to sneak a gun past their metal detector, so I'd decided there was no point in trying. But it hurt, it hurt. You heard about people saying they felt naked without their gun. With me it was worse.

Fitz-Roberts looked worried. "Well, I hope there's something you'll be able to do if you run into trouble, Ben. That's an awful lot of money you've got there."

I said, "If anybody bothers me, I'm going to ask them real nice to go away. Maybe that will do it."

Sure there was something I was going to be able to do. But why tell him about it? How could I know if maybe he had some kind of double-crossing game in mind?

Well, I was right about them doing that careful check at Heathrow. Their detector crew picked up my cigarette lighter, a big, shiny job I'd brought from New York. If they were opening your carry-on baggage, I would have had to turn around and figure some other way to get back across the pond. But they weren't doing that yet. They just put everything through the detector.

There was nothing to the trip. I set next to some kid, 12-13 or so, and talked baseball with him all the way back. I'm good at seeing two-three games a week right through the season and if I wasn't doing what I was doing, I'd rather be a ball player than anything else. Not

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head and he was trying to get out the door and all I could do was slam every slug I had into him scowling or other and then put out of them myself.

Like Truman dropping the A-bomb on Hiroshima, I never lost any sleep over it. But there was one time if it had worked out different, it would have been all right with me. That was when I was with Home Miller in 1971.

Home was all the Mafia's gambles on the East Coast from Boston down to Charleston, South Carolina. He got the players, he got the places where the games were held, and he got his own people to be the "house" out of the organization he was the head of. The Mafia put up the protection and Home gave them a cut out of all his rackets. On an average week that came to about \$11,000, which added up to about \$600,000 a year.

It was my job to collect the weekly take from all Home's games and deliver it to Vito Orlando in the back room of a barber shop on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn between four and five every Wednesday afternoon. But even more important than getting the money there was seeing that no one saw me doing it. The whole thing about the Mafia is that it's our hush leading to another. You can't let the wrong people latch on at any point because if they do they've got too good a chance of moving up the ladder.

All right, I used to put in three days a week picking up the money from Home's games doing the route by car, starting at Charleston and working all the way up to Boston and getting back to New York on a Wednesday morning and then going out to the barber shop by subway in the afternoon, dressed like a sailor and carrying the money in a duffel bag. I was driving a good Buick and had it serviced at a place called Tom and Willie's every Thursday afternoon. The one thing I couldn't afford was a breakdown on the way. We were running on such too tight a schedule for that. So the servicing was important and Tom and Willie were good at what they did — both young guys, no more than 25, and always with a cheerful word for you and their prices were okay, too.

I made this one trip where I had some time on my hands in Baltimore and I picked up a girl in a bar and we had ourselves a pretty good time in the back of the car. Now this was a girl with a lot of passion, Naomi, and once she started getting steamed up it was all sobbing and pouting and "Benny, keep doing it," and "don't

let it stop, Benny," and Benny this and Benny that like she's going out of her skull. She was so hot, it was beginning to be a drag. I like things a little more under control than that, so I changed her as soon as I was able to. Then I went ahead with the rest of my route, delivered the money to Vito in the barber shop, and the next afternoon I put the car in Tom and Willie's for the evening.

At four o'clock I went back to pick it up and Willie hands me my bill and says in that cheerful way of his, "Just the oil change and lubrication, Benny. Everything else is okay." I paid him and we lidded around awhile and then I went out of there without showing anything on my face about what I was thinking. But I was thinking plenty, mainly that he'd been asking me Ben for months and here suddenly it was Benny right after that crazy girl was doing it in the car in Baltimore.

So I drove the car to where I could look it over in private and it took me only about 10 minutes to find the bag they'd put in the padding of the rear seat. It wasn't much bigger than the top of a milk bottle, small enough so I could wrap it in my handkerchief. I did that and then drove back to their place. It was past five by then and they were getting ready to close up. Tom was doing something at the cash register and Willie was coming out of the car wiping his hands on a paper towel. They glanced when they saw me and Willie said, "Forgot something?" and

I said, "Yes, but you did."

I put the handkerchief on the counter and maintained for Tom to open it up. He started to, but they both had to know what was inside because suddenly they both started scowling like mad, only there wasn't room in there for them to get away. I got Tom by leaning straight over the counter and lying down at the floor where he'd dropped and was clawing at his coveralls for a gun he had in there. Willie managed to get into the car, but I locked the door open and knuckled him down across the head and shot him sitting there with his mouth going, "No, no, for God's sake —" but no sound coming out, just his mouth making the words.

We had to do a lot of fast work after that, moving all Home's games to different locations and abandoning the barber shop because we didn't know how much Tom and Willie had recorded. What we did know, though, was that they were Feds and that killing them was the only thing I could have done with them. Still, of all the 18 they're the only two it would have been all right with me if it hadn't happened that way. They weren't bad guys. It was just that they were on the wrong side of the fence.

One more thing about Tom and Willie. For a couple of months after I killed them, they were the ones that were taking the money away from me every night in my dreams.

But that was only for a couple of months, and then it stopped.



"That's quite a suggestion, young lady. Allow me to sleep on it."

LAST LAUGHS



"These are very expensive restaurants, but do you have any more after you left handbagged?"

"Darling," he whispered, "I love you. I adore you. I need you. I can't live without you!"

"Then," she gasped, partly pushing him away.

"Why, what's wrong?"

"It's just that I don't want to get serious," she said quietly.

"Who's serious?" he asked.

A fellow walked into a bar, had a beer and left 50 cents on the counter, which the bartender slipped into his pocket. The owner of the bar saw the merchant and asked, "What exactly do you think you're doing?"

"How do you like that?" answered the barkeep smoothly. "The guy comes in, drinks his beer, leaves the 50-cent tip, and there doesn't pay for his drink."

Three elderly, retired girls were sitting in the park, comparing notes.

The first one said, "Time sure marches on. I'm losing my sight. I used to watch the birds near the tree in the park, and would see every color in their feathers."

The second fellow said, "It's even worse for me. I seem to be losing my hearing. I used to be able to hear the hum of the bumble bee and even the squeaking of a mouse. But, not any more."

The third old girl said, "That's nothing. I used to be losing my mind. Last night while my wife and I were lying in bed, she suddenly jumped up, threw off the covers, and said, 'I've had it!' And do you know, I don't even remember giving it to her!"

The young lady was disappointed even though her recently deceased husband had left her a huge fortune. Her best friend tried to console her. "You're still young, you still have your life ahead of you and he had to go sooner or later."

"You can't understand," the young widow sobbed, "he was the greatest lover. We lived next door to a church and he used to make love to me by the sound of the church bells. If it wasn't for that damn fire truck he'd be alive today."

The compulsive wanderer staggered home only to be met at the door by his wife. "Where the hell have you been 'til this hour?" she screamed.

"Never mind that," the husband replied. "You'd better pack your bags. I just lost you in a poker game."

"How could you do such a terrible thing?" he started with demand.

"It wasn't me," he explained. "I had to fold with a royal flush."

The police officer shined his light inside the car where a young man and woman were locked in a compromising embrace.

"We're just necking, officer!" the young man said quickly.

"Well," said the policeman. "Put your neck back in your pants and move out of here!"

The boss had taken his new secretary out for a drink. As they sat at their table he remarked, "When I see more drink and I'll feel it."

"Get more drink," she said. "And I'll let you!"

A woman driving a station wagon full of little children, couldn't see the red light and she was right on top of it because a large truck had stopped in the lane next to the curb. As a result she almost ran down an elderly gentleman crossing the street before she could manage to stop.

Putting over his lifebelt, he roared at her, "It looks like you don't know when to stop."

Without hesitation, the harnessed lady cheerfully poked her head out the car window and yelled back, "They're not all mine."

The Old Man was having a difficult time with his totem. Nothing would make him stay home. Every night he was gone until the wee hours of the morning. In desperation she took him to the vet, but him "fixed." The vet assured her that the cat would stay home now.

A few days later she came back into the vet's office. "You told me my cat would stay home," she exclaimed. "He's still here gone every night since the operation!"

"Oh, he'll stay home after another week or so," the vet assured her. "He's just out concealing restrictions!"

"You used to hold my hand years ago when we were courting," she said as they were side by side in bed. He reached over took her hand, and held it.

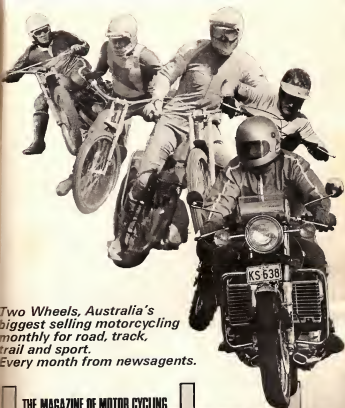
"Then you used to kiss me," she purred. He turned over, gave her a slight kiss, and then rolled over again trying to get to sleep.

"After that, you used to bite my neck."

With this, the husband got up. "Where are you going?" she asked. "To get my teeth," he grumbled.



"I put sandwiches and coffee in the closet in case my husband comes home unexpectedly!"



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